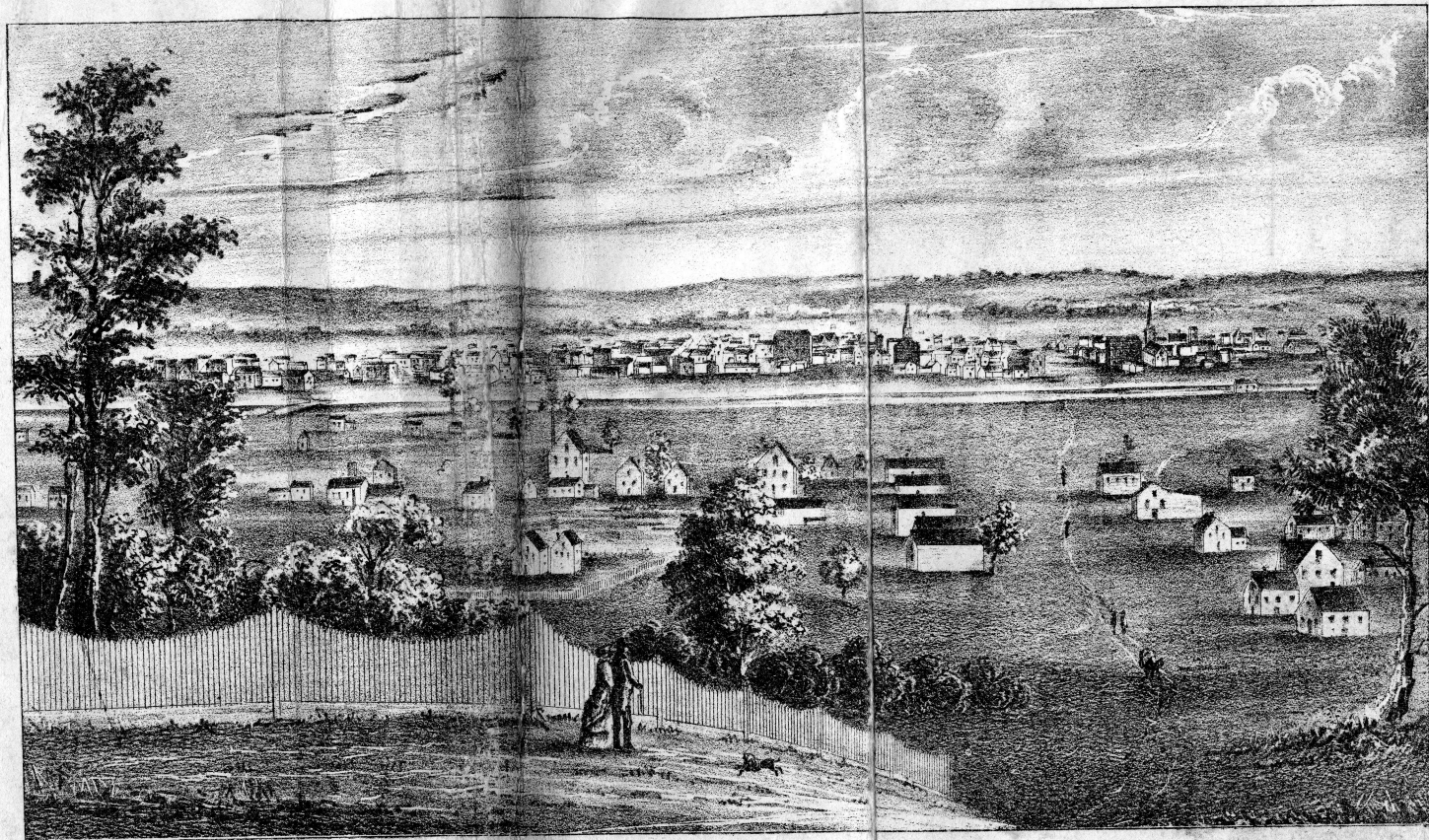


HISTORY

OF

DES MOINES

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Drawn by W. R. Wheeler

DES MOINES, IOWA

From Capitol Hill, 1857.

HISTORICAL RESEARCHES
TO
The State Historical Society
OF IOWA,

This Volume is Respectfully Dedicated,

BY THE AUTHOR.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1857, by
H. B. TURRILL,
In the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the District of Iowa.

PREFACE.

THE AUTHOR of this volume presents it, without apology, to the public, confident that, whatever are its merits or faults, they will be recognized and properly estimated. No effort at elaborateness has been attempted, but a plain and concise statement of facts, without recourse to rhetorical flourishes or wearisome reflections, has been presented. Errors in some particulars may have occurred, but, from the pains and labor which have been employed to guard against them, it is believed that they are few and unimportant.

The history of Des Moines does not, it is true, extend through the dim and antiquated legends of centuries past, revealing the ruthless deeds of barbarity and war. It embraces a period so recent, that even romance has not disturbed its quiet, with wild tales of what was so obscure as to become suitable for imagination to enlarge upon and mystify. Human memories can yet impart interest and truth to the statements, or correct the mistakes of the historian, who would place upon record those reminiscences of interest, afforded even by the brief existence of Des Moines. To preserve those reminiscences while yet they can be derived from the lips of men who experienced them personally, and who in a few years will pass from among us, is the object of this book. The flight of every year throws a shadow upon the past. What now is clear will soon become dim, what now is dim will finally be impenetrable.

The descriptive portion of the work is intended not so much for the edification of the citizens of Des Moines, as to afford reliable information to those abroad, whose attention has been arrested by the progress already made, and enterprise evinced by our city, and whose co-operation

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can only be expected, or influence, or personal presence obtained, by a detailed statement of the resources and present prosperity of the city. As the capital of the State, Des Moines is a place of uncommon interest, and public curiosity is awake to know its advantages. The author has attempted to gratify that curiosity. To those who have kindly assisted him in rendering this work more interesting and attractive, the author acknowledges himself under the most unaffected obligations. His especial thanks are due to Hon. Curtis Bates, Benjamin Bryant, Esq., Rev. R. Weiser, Peter Myers, Esq., and W. R. Wheeler, Esq., for valuable aid, and to many others for advice and encouragement while prosecuting his arduous labor of collecting material for this work.

Des Moines, May 25th, 1857.

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HISTORY OF DES MOINES.

CHAPTER I.

Treaty with the Indians—Establishment of a Garrison at Fort Des Moines—Arrival of the first Steamboat—Number of the Troops—Capt. Allen's Quarters—Early Residents—American Fur Company—First dwelling-house built in Polk County—Indian Traders—Residence of Interpreter and Indian Agent—Jonas Carsner's Feat—Sketch of Keokuk and Powesheik.

A noble race! but they are gone,

With their old forests, wide and deep,

And we have built our homes upon

Fields where their generations sleep.

Their fountains slake our thirst at noon;

Upon their fields our harvests wave:

Our lovers woo beneath their moon,

And they have found an early grave.—W. C. BRYANT.

The county of Polk was included in the purchase made by the Commissioners of the United States, of the Sac and Fox Indians, at Agency City, October 11th, 1842. The eastern portion of Iowa had been acquired by the previous treaties of 1832, 1836, and 1837; but the aborigines yet remained, clinging tenaciously to their ancestral domain.

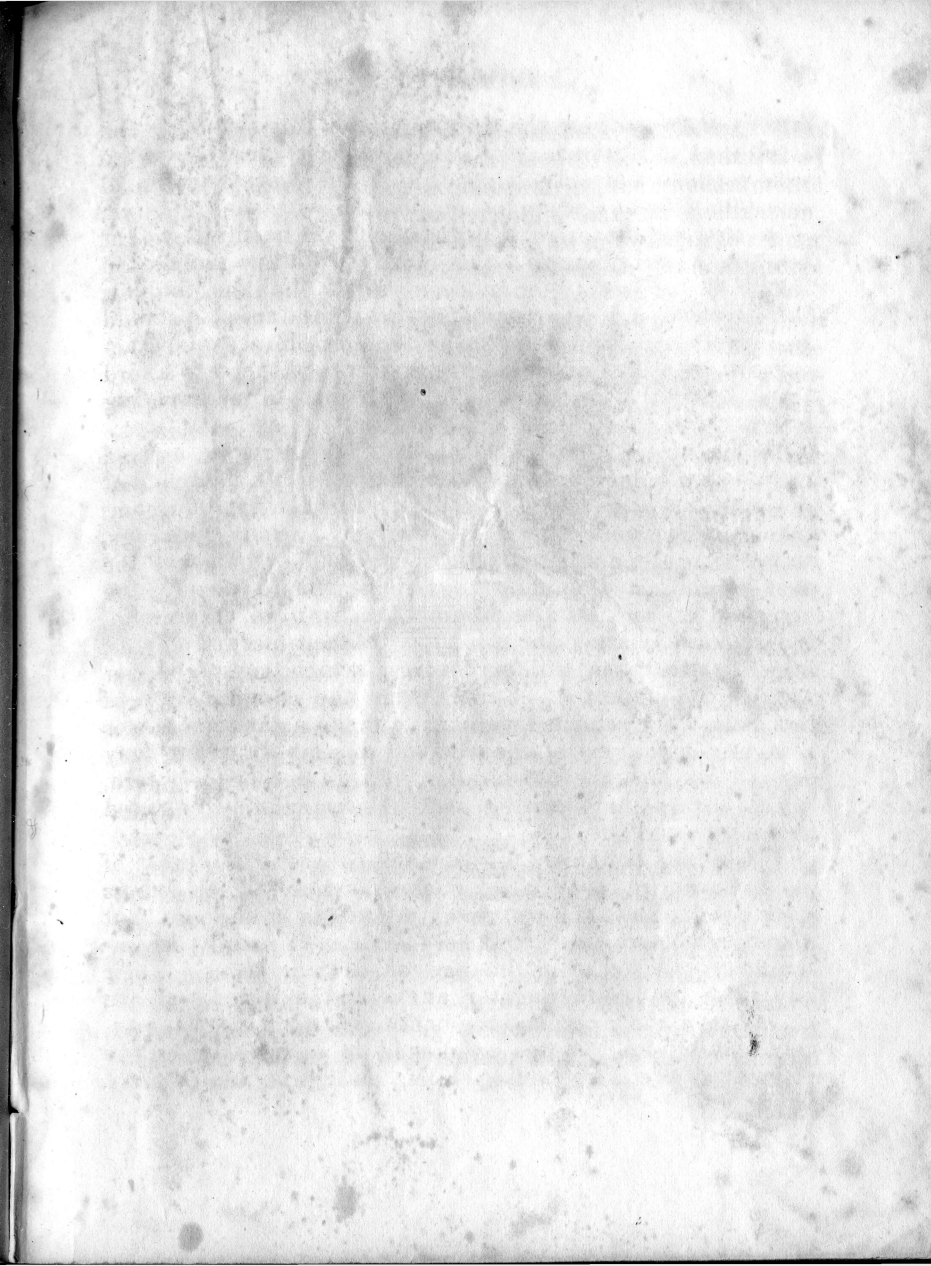
When the western part of the territory was purchased from them, they were allowed to remain upon the lands ceded, and to have exclusive possession of them for the term of three years from the date of the treaty. They imme-

diately removed from the vicinity of the Mississippi to the interior of the State, on the new purchase, where they were safe, for a time, from the intrusion of the whites, and could find the wilds and solitudes harmonious with their natures.

In their new location, it was feared that hostilities might arise between them and the Sioux, or Potawatamies, on the north and west; and by desire of the Indians, and for their protection, it was stipulated that a military post should be established at the junction of the Des Moines and Racoon rivers, and sufficient force maintained there to afford them security from all hostile incursions of neighboring tribes.

On the 9th of May, 1843, the little steamer *Ione* arrived at the place where our city now stands, with a detachment of troops on board, who, immediately on their landing, commenced the work of constructing the various buildings, which were denominated the "Fort." The *Ione* was the first steamboat that had ever ventured to disturb the clear waters of the Des Moines so far from its mouth. Having disembarked the troops, with their accoutrements, baggage, and the military stores, which composed her lading, she departed. Capt. Allen, the commandant of the future Fort, returned with her to make arrangements for bringing on the rest of the troops. In a month or two they arrived to join their comrades, a mere corporal's guard, which Capt. Allen had left, and all immediately engaged heartily in building their barracks.

While thus employed they encamped along the bank of the river, above what is now Court Avenue. Their labors were severe, and they had many privations to undergo, but a soldier's disposition grows very facile, and readily accommodates itself to every change of circumstances. Their gay songs, and loud laughter, at evening, mingled with the dashings of the river, and the beating of the morning drum, or the loud bugle-notes awakened to new responses the echoes of the surrounding hills, and gave the western





A RELIC.

*From the Manuscript of
Wm. Shakespeare M.D.C.*

breezes their first lessons in our national melodies. The balmy air was invigorating and healthful, the beauties of summer adorned the forests and prairies, the enchantments of nature inviolate from the despoiling hand of civilization, were profusely spread around them, all combining to render their situation pleasing and attractive, so far as natural charms could do so.

Their number was nearly one hundred—consisting of two companies, one of infantry, the other of cavalry. All were under the command of Capt. James Allen, an officer experienced and determined; of sound judgment and excellent military talent. Lieutenants Greer, King and Potter, served under him;—the first belonged to the cavalry troop, the others, at separate times, commanded in the infantry.

Capt. Allen's quarters were situated somewhat east of where the Collins House now stands. The building, like the others belonging to the Fort, was of one story, of rough logs, strong and comfortable. Within the last year or two it has been demolished to make room for other edifices.

The buildings which composed the Fort were scattered along the banks of the Des Moines, and at various points through what is now the business part of the town. They consisted of barracks for the men, and stables for the horses, and were some twenty or twenty-five in number, a part of which yet remain, and will serve the curious reader with a sample of what the others were, their appearance and construction being very similar.

As it was a fundamental portion of the treaty, by which the last purchase was made of the Indians, that they should have exclusive possession of the territory ceded, for three years next succeeding the 4th of October, 1842, the Commissioners of the United States were rigorous in enforcing its strict performance. To turn back the tide of pioneer enterprise eagerly sweeping westward to occupy a region of whose surpassing fertility rumor had even then spoken of

in the most glowing language, was by no means an easy task. Yet so far as possible the white men were excluded, and the Indians allowed to roam unmolested over the prairies and wood-lands, abounding in the choicest game, themselves its only purveyors. But a few whites settled near the Fort, by permission of the government agents, and part of them were so pleased with this region that they have ever since made it their home. Some of them had families, and the Fort and its environs soon assumed the appearance of a regular settlement, and looked quite village-like.

Among the earliest settlers in the vicinity of Des Moines were John B. Scott, W. A. Scott, Wm. Lamb and Alexander Turner, who contracted with the Government to furnish hay, grain, and various other farm products, for the use of the garrison at the Fort. Charles Weatherford, and a man named Baker, were settled as black-smiths. J. M. Thrift was engaged as a tailor for the soldiers. John Sturdevant and James Drake were employed as gun-smiths for the Indians. Benjamin Bryant, among the very first to arrive, was in the employ of W. G. & G. W. Ewings, authorized Indian traders.

W. G. & G. W. Ewings had an establishment for trading purposes east of the Des Moines river, in what is now Scott & Dean's addition. This company, in 1843, built the first regular dwelling house ever erected in Polk county. It stood near their trading house, and, like the rest, was a rude log cabin, saw-mills being a symbol of civilization at that time unknown in the country.

Robert A. Kinsay, another trader who supplied the settlers and garrison with various descriptions of merchandise, but was not allowed to sell to the Indians, had a store near the fort buildings. Its locality, as defined according to the present condition of the city, was on Vine street, between Second and Third.

The American Fur Company had established a trading post on the east side of the river, on what is now known

as the "Hazen Farm." Several of their buildings yet remain, greatly dilapidated, on the banks of the Des Moines, a mile below the town. Dr. T. K. Brooks purchased the establishment when the agency at Fort Des Moines was discontinued. A curious and valuable relic of that Company's transactions is now in the possession of Benjamin Bryant, Esq., of this city. It is an account book kept by the agent with the Indians, containing the polysyllabic names of several hundred of them, the articles which they purchased, the money or furs paid, and the price of each article sold or traded.

The Indian Agent, Major Beach, and the Interpreter, Joseph Smart, resided east of the Fur Company's buildings, on the hill. Near the Agency House were the smith shops, where Sturdevant and Drake wrought for the Sacs and Foxes.

Peter Newcomer had permission from Capt. Allen to reside on Agency Prairie, on condition that he would build a bridge across Four Mile Creek.

The foregoing enumeration includes very nearly all the residents who settled near the fort in 1843, except the government troops. Their numbers continued about the same until the Indian title expired, when immigrants poured in like a flood. The Indians were quiet and inoffensive, and, save an occasional drunken brawl among them, when slight disturbances occurred, they manifested no dangerous traits. They were continually expecting the Sioux to attack them, and at one time the alarm was given that a war-party of their revengeful enemies was actually approaching. This, for a while, caused great excitement, but it soon subsided. Some of the Sacs were playing cards near the Fort at the time, and strong as was their terror of the Sioux, their passion for gambling was more powerful. They retreated into one of the block-houses, but still intently pursued their absorbing game.

Some renegade white men had penetrated into the re-

serve, sold whisky to the Indians, and after gaining their acquaintance and friendship, abused it by stealing some fine horses. Incidents of this kind caused Capt. Allen to send out a detachment of dragoons to capture the thieves, and return the stolen horses to their legal owners.

This was a difficult task; the illimitable wilderness around affording an ample retreat for the miscreants; but finally one of them was captured and brought into the fort. This was Jonas Carsner, since notorious in the criminal records of this and other counties, for felonies of every description. He was tried by the officers of the Fort, and although there was not a doubt of his guilt, no direct proof of it could be obtained. Capt. Allen, therefore, thought it not best to sentence him under the civil law; but knowing the culprit was certainly deserving of punishment, he delivered him over to the Indians. They took him out, tied him to a tree, and gave him a most unmerciful whipping. This certainly should have had some beneficial effect, but subsequent events proved otherwise. One of the horses stolen by Carsner had been found. The same night Carsner was rewarded with the cat-o-nine-tails, two horses were stolen from a man by the name of Fish, who was bringing supplies to the Fort, and had encamped for the night a few miles from the settlement. The Indians kindly lent Mr. Fish the horse which they had just reclaimed, and he started to search for his own. But, while following their trail through a lonesome strip of timber, suddenly Jonas Carsner appeared, mounted on one of Fish's horses, and riding abruptly up, he dexterously cut the saddle girth with a huge knife, hurled Fish to the ground, and bore away, at full speed, the twice captured horse!

The discomfited man now felt "like a *Fish* out of water." No resource was left him but to trudge doggedly back to his Indian friends, whose curses, when they fully comprehended Carsner's last *coup-d'etat*, may be imagined, but not recorded.

Keokuk, the head chief of the Sacs, was a man of noble stature, well proportioned, and of handsome features. His village was some five miles south-east of the Fort, and the beautiful prairie on which he and his kindred dwelt, yet bears his name.

Powesheik, chief of the Foxes, lived on Skunk river. He is described as tall, heavily built, of rough cast of features, and a disposition full of exaction and arrogance. Both he and Keokuk were ardent lovers of fire-water. There were few, indeed, of their tribes, who did not follow such illustrious examples.

The inheritance of these brave chieftains has passed from them; strangers tread upon the burial places of their race; their spirits have sought the happy hunting-ground in the spirit-land; only the vestiges of their once powerful tribes exist; but the names of KEOKUK and POWESHEIK are destined to be long remembered, linked, as they are, with the annals of the past, and inscribed upon the political and municipal institutions of the present country. The name of a county perpetuates the memory of the one; both a county and a vast city, full of wealth and enterprise, the other. And when the memory of their rank and deeds shall have eluded the researches of the annalist, their *names*, at least, posterity will recognize and repeat.

CHAPTER II.

Expiration of Indian Title—Eagerness of Settlers to make claims—Organization of Polk County—Its Boundaries—Commissioners to locate County Seat—First County Election—Officers Elected—First District Court—Names of first Grand Jury—Anecdote of Judge Williams—Laying out of the Town of Ft. Des Moines—Sale of Lots—Prices of Lots then and now—First Groceries—Post-Office—First Wedding in Polk County—Early Church History.

The Indian title to the lands of this portion of Iowa, expired at midnight, of October 11th, 1845. This period was impatiently awaited by those who were already here, for after that time each was at liberty to make a claim of three hundred and twenty acres, which could be held until Government brought the lands into market, and then purchased under such regulations as are now in force. Long before the expiration of the Indian title, the settlers around the Fort had made arrangements with each other, and the most valuable tracts were already considered claims. Some claims were even measured and staked off, but this was of no validity, and done only for convenience, or to facilitate such subsequent survey as was absolutely necessary to establish and identify it.

So eager were the settlers, who had previously remained only at the sufferance of the General Government, to have permanent homes near the Fort, that during the forepart of the night preceding October 11th, men were stationed in all directions around, with instructions to immediately begin the measurement of claims, as soon as midnight arrived.

Precisely at twelve o'clock, the loud report of a musket fired from the Agency House, announced that the empire of the red-man had ended here forever, and that of his master race begun. Answering reports rang sharply on the night-

air, in quick succession, from every hill-top, and in every valley, till the signal was conveyed for miles around, and all understood that civilization had now commenced her reign in Central Iowa. The moon was slowly sinking in the west, and its beams afforded a feeble and uncertain light, for the measuring of claims, in which so many were engaged. Ere long the landscape was shrouded in darkness, save the wild and fitful glaring of torches, carried by the claim-makers. Before the night had entirely worn away, the rough surveys were finished, and the Indian lands had found new tenants. Throughout the country thousands of acres were laid off in claims before dawn. Settlers rushed in by hundreds, and the region lately so tranquil and silent, felt the impulse of the change, and became vocal with the sounds of industry and enterprise.

A reserve of a square mile around the Fort, was maintained so long as Fort Des Moines continued a military post. Part of the troops were removed in the autumn of 1845; the remainder continued until June, of the ensuing year. One hundred and sixty acres of this reserve, including all the buildings belonging to the Fort, were afterwards ceded by Congress to Polk county, and for several years these buildings furnished the county with various public offices.

The law organizing Polk county was passed by the legislature of Iowa, January 17th, 1846. Its boundaries were then as follows: Beginning at the north-east corner of township 81, north of range 22 west; thence west to the north-west corner of township 81, north of range 25 west; thence south to the south-west corner of township 77, north of range 25 west; thence east to the south-east corner of township 77, north of range 22 west; thence north to the place of beginning. Subsequent legislation, however, has robbed it of four Congressional townships, along its southern border, and annexed them to Warren county.

The Commissioners appointed to locate the county-seat,

were Thomas Hughes, of Johnson, M. T. Williams, of Mahaska, and Giles M. Pinneo, of Scott county. Fort Des Moines being the most central and accessible point, presented advantages impossible to be overlooked, and was fixed upon the county seat.

The first election ever held in Polk county occurred on the first Monday in April, 1846. In Fort Des Moines the polls were opened in one of the dragoon houses, near what is now called the "Point." There were three places of voting in the county: at Thomas Mitchell's, in Camp Creek precinct; at J. D. Parmelee's, near Allen's mills; and at the Fort. The number of votes polled at each, was as follows:

Fort Des Moines,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	70
Camp Creek,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	42
Allen's Mills,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	63
<hr/>								
Total,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	175

The whole number of inhabitants at that time in Polk county, exclusive of the troops, was between two and three hundred.

The following county officers were chosen at this election:

County Surveyor—A. D. Jones.

" Recorder—Thomas McMullen.

" Treasurer—Wm. F. Ayres.

" Assessor—G. B. Clark.

" Collector—Addison Michael.

" Commissioners—Benj. Saylor, Wm. H. Meacham and E. W. Fouts.

Probate Judge—John Saylor.

Sheriff—Thomas Mitchell.

Coroner—James Phillips.

Of Des Moines precinct, G. B. Clark, W. H. Meacham, and T. K. Brooks, were judges of election; J. T. Meldrum and Lewis Whitten, clerks.

Polk county, at its organization, was included in the second Judicial District, of which the Hon. Joseph Williams was Judge. He presided at the first Court held in the county, which convened on the second of April, 1846. One of the log shanties of the garrison, near where the "Great Western" may now be seen, was appropriated as the temporary abode of Justice. Here Court was opened in due form, and with as much dignity as the unpropitious circumstances would allow. John B. Larsh, U. S. Marshal; Thomas Baker, District Attorney; and Perry L. Crossman, District Clerk, were present. It appearing that no grand jury had been summoned, the Court adjourned till the next day, when the Sheriff returned his *venire*, with the names of the following grand jurors, twenty-two* "good men and true."

William Lamb, John B. Scott, Samuel Dilley, John Baird, George B. Warden, J. M. Thrift, Samuel Deford, Samuel Shafer, W. W. Clapp, Benjamin Saylor, Peter Newcomer, Newton Lamb, T. McMullen, Jeremiah Church, Thaddeus Willman, A. Brannon, G. B. Clark, Wm. F. Ayres, J. D. Parmalee, James Davis, J. J. Meldrum, Thomas Leonard.

The grand jury being impaneled, sworn and charged, were given in custody to Lewis Whitten, bailiff, and went out as usual to consider on such matters and things as might perchance be brought to their notice. Happily crimes had been but few, and they found nothing demanding their attention, consequently they brought in no "true bills," except for their fees. They soon returned to Court, were discharged, and the Court adjourned till the next term.

Jeremiah Church, one of the jury, says in his journal, they were an uncouth and barbarous looking set; that he felt constrained to apologize to the Judge for their rough appearance—but Mr. Church does not state whether *his* habiliments were altogether up to the dignity of a grand

* The Court Docket says *twenty-three*, but only twenty-two names are given. Perhaps by an error of the Clerk, one of them is omitted.

juror or not. Judge Williams jocosely told him that men might have clean hearts under dirty shirts; and that in a new country every allowance was to be made for personal attire and appearance.

Judge Williams, afterwards Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Iowa, possessed valuable and extensive legal acquirements, which his long judicial career in this State has abundantly proven. He was, withal, an inveterate joker, and never so happy as when he had an opportunity to give his mirthful proclivities full exercise. Many stories illustrating his ready wit and appetite for fun, are related. The only person, however, who ever beat him with the tongue, was a *woman*, Mary Hays. The feminine Charon of the Des Moines rather checked his loquacity, when one day he attempted to play off one of his jokes upon her. The Judge was boarding on the east side of the river—bridges existed only in the imaginations of the most enterprising—and in attending Court he crossed to and fro in a skiff. Sometimes one, sometimes another ferried him over, but once there was no man at hand. Miss Hays, a young, and in all probability, a very good-looking lady, was washing near the river bank.

"Mary," said the Judge, "how am I to get across this river?"

"Why, in a skiff, I suppose," Mary quietly replied.

"But there is no one to bring back the boat, and I am a very poor rower. Now, Mary, really, don't you think you could take pity on a man in such a troublesome predicament, leave your interesting work and volunteer to row me over? I'll pay you in any number of—kisses you ask, sweeter and heartier ones than you ever received in your life."

"Certainly, I'll take you over; but as to kisses, Mr. Judge, I don't want any thing of that sort, particularly from such an old scrub as you."

"O, I suppose you have had rather a surfeit of that article lately. Has Jim ——"

"Now, Judge, if you want to go across, just get in and sit still, and *be still!*"

Judge Williams waited until they had got fairly out in the current of the river. Mary plied the oars as if she had seen sea-service.

"Mary."

"Sir."

"Suppose I just turn this boat down stream, carry you off and marry you; would it not be a delightful plan. You would just suit me, and I would you. Certainly destiny always intended us for mates, and I suppose a little scheming would be excusable to gain such a lovely prize as you. Here we go now, down the river to New Orleans, or elsewhere."

At this Mary's provoked spirit fairly glittered in her eyes. With intensity of emphasis, she exclaimed:

"You carry *ME* off! *You* marry *me!* I would not *have* such an old dried-up cracklin'. I wouldn't marry *you* if you were the last man on earth, and a woman couldn't get to heaven without a husband; and if you don't stop your nonsense and behave yourself, I'll pitch your head first into the river, and *you* may make as long a voyage as you please, but one thing is certain, you don't take *me* with you!"

The Judge, of course, stopped teasing her at this, laughing heartily at her Amazonian threats; and rumor does not say whether he paid his fare in exchange in Cupid's bank or not.

In July the County Commissioners proceeded to lay off the town of Fort Des Moines in lots, and to make sale of them at public auction. From their books we make the following extract:

June 1st, 1846.

The Board of Commissioners met pursuant to adjournment. Present, W. H. Meacham and Benj. Saylor.

ORDERED, That A. D. Jones, County Surveyor, proceed as

soon as practicable to lay off a town, at the site selected for the county seat of Polk county.

ORDERED, That a notice of a sale of lots in Fort Des Moines, on the 15th day of July, 1846, be published for three successive weeks, in the Iowa Capital Reporter, at Iowa City; the Burlington Hawkeye, and the Iowa Democrat, at Keosauqua, Iowa.

Terms of sale of town lots—One-sixth cash in hand, the balance in three equal instalments, one in six months, one in twelve months, the other in eighteen months.

W. H. MEACHAM, }
B. SAYLOR, } Commissioners.

The prices of lots at that time were somewhat below the present valuation. We give the terms at which several lots were sold, and their present prices, that the reader may judge of the advance in real property within ten years, although it must be borne in mind that the proportionate rise has been greater within the last two or three years than previously:

No.	Lot.	No.	Block.	Location.	Original Price.	Present Price.
5	31			Cor. Walnut & Court Av.	\$35 00	\$5,000 00
1	31			Cor. Walnut and Third.	18 00	5,000 00
1	20			Cor. Court Av. & P. Sq.	52 00	4,500 00
1	34			Cor. Court and Second.	30 00	5,000 00
7	34			Cor. Vine and Water.	50 00	4,000 00
5	35			Sec., bet. Vine and Court.	25 00	5,200 00
8	28			Cor. Sec. and Market sts.	106 00	4,000 00

The first groceries opened in Fort Des Moines were kept by W. W. Clapp and Addison Michael, who were licensed by the County Commissioners for the term of three months. The cost of obtaining a license for that length of time was six dollars and twenty-five cents, or twenty-five dollars per annum. Addison Michael built, in 1847, the first frame house ever erected in the limits of the town. It may yet be seen, somewhat weather-worn, on the east side of Second street, just above Market.

After the sale of lots buildings began to be rapidly erected, and the incipient town transferred itself from paper plats to an actual terraqueous existence. The dense growth of hazel-bushes which covered large portions of the town site was attacked on all sides, and soon disappeared. No finer position could have been selected for a town. The Des Moines, navigable to the "Fort" for a large portion of the season, here united with the Raccoon branch, a stream of considerable depth and volume, and on the peninsular plain formed by their junction, nature seemed to have provided special advantages for an accessible and healthy town. The heavy timber lands which skirted the rivers, and the immense supplies of coal and stone, in adjoining hills, which, though then not fully explored, were known to exist, designated it not only as the appropriate locality for the county seat, but inspired bright hopes of its future growth and importance, which the present has not failed to realize.

A Post Office was established at Fort Des Moines in 1846. Joseph Smart, the Indian Interpreter, was appointed Post Master, during the early part of that year, but he soon resigned, and Dr. T. K. Brooks took his place. The office was kept at the Agency House, at first. Afterwards it was removed to the Fur Company's buildings, near the river, and about a mile south of the present town. It is related of the Hon. P. M. Cassady, who was one of the earliest Post Masters, that it was a common occurrence for him to bring up all the "mail" for the "Fort" *in his hat*, so little correspondence did the pioneers of this region have with the world they had left behind them. Mail facilities were then very limited and hazardous. Mails were generally transported on horseback, and this through an hundred miles of country almost uninhabited, and were subject to peril from storm and stream. As a matter of course delays and losses often occurred. They could not possibly be avoided. At the present time, although the facilities for transporting the mails are far greater, they have not reached the perfection of regularity.

We now turn to the record of a more interesting event: the first duly solemnized marriage that ever occurred in the limits of Polk county, and perhaps in the Indian Purchase which includes it. On the 11th of June, 1846, Benjamin Bryant was married to Miss Elvira B. Burge. The ceremony was performed by Aaron D. Stark, Esq. It was also Esq. Stark's first essay at performing the marriage rite, and he is said to have introduced some variations from the ordinary ritual. The parties married are still resident in Des Moines, and Esq. Bryant often boasts of the worthy example he set for others to follow.

The first sermon ever delivered in Des Moines was by Rev. Ezra Rathbun, a Methodist minister, on occasion of a funeral, in 1845. In the same year a Methodist Society was organized in Des Moines, by the Rev. Mr. Russel. Mr. Russel was then traveling in what was called Fort Des Moines Mission, including the whole of Polk, Madison, Warren, the north half of Marion, and the south half of Jasper, Boone, and Dallas counties. About the same territory is now embraced in the Des Moines District. The Society, when first organized, consisted of the following persons: Joseph Solenbarger, Sarah Solenbarger, Rev. Abner Rathbun, Betsy Rathbun, Sen., Rev. Ezra Rathbun, Jonathan Rathbun, Benjamin T. Hoxie, and Mr. Meachem and wife. Mr. Solenbarger was appointed class-leader.

CHAPTER III.

First Land Sales—Value of Claims—Fears of Settlers that their Claims would be pre-empted or purchased contrary to their interests—Organization of the Claim Club—Proceedings of the Meeting—Signers of the Club-laws—Other meetings of Citizens—Appointment of an Agent to go to Iowa City, and bid off claims for the Settlers in Polk County—The Reeves Mob.

The first land-sales of the land embraced within the limits of the last Indian purchase, occurred at Iowa City, which was the nearest Land Office, in the fall of 1848. The sole tenure by which many of the settlers in this vicinity held their lands up to that time was by the precarious right of claim—precarious because mere occupancy of government land, without a compliance with certain legal formalities, gave no certain property in the land occupied, to the possessor of it. Pre-emption was different, and gave the settler the right to hold 160 acres, and when it was surveyed and brought into market, the privilege of buying it at the minimum rate of \$1.25 per acre. But though 320 acres, or even more, might be claimed, it was liable to be sold to the highest bidder at the sales, according to the usual laws affecting the sale of government lands, and those who held claims felt very uneasy lest they might have to pay an unreasonable price, since it was very evident that a great portion of the Des Moines Valley lands was worth more than \$1.25 per acre. This was particularly true of heavy tracts of timber, choice prairie and wood-land combined, or of lands in the vicinity of towns, or favorable locations for them, or extending over rich deposits of stone, coal, or other valuable minerals. Lands possessing these advantages and of this kind were most of the claims, were worth from two to twelve dollars an acre, even at that time, and the

holders of them, could they obtain a good title at reasonable rates, were to be esteemed fortunate. But this desirable title was in the hands of the United States, and who would be the future possessor of it was somewhat uncertain.

Speculators had industriously scoured the country over, noted the most valuable portions, even though they were claims, and were ready to give high prices for them when they came into market; thus robbing the first settlers who had borne the privations and hardships of the wilderness for several years, of their lands, and whatever improvements they had made upon them. Their homesteads, which they had wrested from the primitive wilderness of prairie or forest and changed by enterprise and industry into cultivated fields, laden with yellow corn or waving grain, were liable to become the property of these prowling land-sharks, whose avaricious eyes saw the value of the lands and cared little for justice or right, provided they themselves might secure a handsome profit. With longer purses, they could afford to pay higher prices than the poor settlers; while the latter, sensible of their rights, and aware by what labor, exposure, and self-denial they had acquired these rights, felt, in view of the prospect in future, indignant and exasperated, and felt so justly.

So highly incensed did the people become at the idea of speculators over-bidding them at the land-sales, that they viewed every stranger with distrust, lest his errand among them should be to note the numbers of some choice tracts, and make them his own by giving a price beyond the reach of the claimant. A unity of feeling on this subject filled the entire country. They were determined to save their claims, despite any effort or intervention to the contrary, and, if possible, their intention was to pay no more than the lowest government price. Strangers passing through the country had to be careful not to meddle with the lands claimed, otherwise than honestly buying them from the possessors. If their object was thought to be different—if

they were suspected of being engaged in any schemes for the unjust deprival of any settler of what were considered his unquestionable rights, they at once incurred the hostile feelings of every inhabitant, and were not safe until they had entirely left the country. Many incidents illustrating this feeling occurred; that of the Holland mob, which took place the ensuing spring, and will hereafter be related, was a case of this kind.

It soon became evident that some regular organization was needed among the settlers, the better to control any outbreaks of popular rage, and cause non-residents to pay due respect to the claims which had been made, as also to prevent difficulties among the settlers themselves, the dishonest of whom did not scruple to take advantage of a neighbor's temporary absence, sickness, or remoteness from aid, and "jump his claim," that is, take and hold possession of it "*vi et armis*," depriving him totally of his rights in the premises. The settlers, or citizens, as they may now more properly be called, of Polk county, held a meeting to consider the proper course to pursue, and as the document which reports their proceedings is particularly interesting, we give it entire. Through the kindness of Benj. Bryant, Esq., in whose possession it has been preserved, a copy of it has been procured for this work:

"At a public meeting of the citizens of Polk county, Iowa, held on the 8th day of April, 1848, at Fort Des Moines, W. H. Meacham was called to the Chair, and L. D. Winchester elected Secretary of the meeting.

"The object of the meeting was then stated by the chairman to be to adopt measures for the security and protection of the citizens of said county, in their claims, against speculators, and all persons who may be disposed wrongfully to deprive settlers of their claims, by pre-emption or otherwise.

Dr. Brooks being called upon made a speech appropriate to the occasion, as also did Mr. Myers.

On motion of the Secretary, the following gentlemen

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were appointed a committee to draft resolutions expressive of the sense of the meeting, to-wit: Winchester, Mitchell, Scott, Sypher, and Saylor.

The committee reported the following resolutions:

1st. *Resolved*, That we will protect all persons who do, or may hold claims, against the interference of any person or persons, who shall attempt to deprive such claim-holders of their claims, by pre-emption or otherwise.

2nd. *Resolved*, That we will in all cases discountenance the speculator, or other person, who shall thus attempt any innovation upon the homes of the rightful settlers; that we will not hold any fellowship with such person, and that he be regarded as a nuisance in the community.

3d. *Resolved*, That no person shall be allowed to pre-empt or purchase in any form from government, any land which shall be held as a claim, unless he shall first obtain the consent of the claimant.

4th. *Resolved*, That the filing of an intention to pre-empt, contrary to the rights of the settler, be regarded as an attempt wrongfully to deprive the citizen of his home and his claim.

5th. *Resolved*, That a committee of five be appointed; and that it shall be their duty to inquire into and adjust all difficulties, and contentions, in cases where claims are in dispute.

6th. *Resolved*, That it shall be the duty of said committee to notify any person who shall pre-empt, or attempt to do so, by filing his intentions to pre-empt, the claim of any other person, to leave the vicinity and the country; and that they have authority to enforce a compliance with said notice.

7th. *Resolved*, That we will sustain and uphold such committee, in their decisions, and in the discharge of all their duties as defined in the foregoing resolutions.

8th. *Resolved*, That all persons be invited to sign the foregoing resolutions, and that the signers pledge themselves to be governed by, and to aid in sustaining the same.

The above resolutions were unanimously adopted.

On motion, the following named gentlemen were appointed a committee to adjust claim difficulties: J. B. Scott, John Saylor, P. B. Fagan, Thomas Mitchell, and Thomas Henderson.

On motion, the meeting adjourned *sine die*.

W. H. MEACHAM, Chairman.

L. D. WINCHESTER, Secretary.

The following signatures were obtained to the resolutions:

W. H. Meacham,	J. D. McGlothlin,	George Dailey,
J. B. Scott,	Wm. Lower,	L. Garre t,
P. B. Fagan,	P. Newcomer,	A. N. Hays,
T. Henderson,	Dayton Harris,	G. W. Lacy,
T. Crabtree,	John Bennett,	T. K. Brooks,
W. A. Scott,	D. S. Cockerham,	Joseph Myers,
W. Wear,	Benj. Bennet,	J. Trib e,
John Myers,	Jas. T. Thompson,	J. G. Tuttle,
T. McCall,	George Knoop,	B. Perkins,
J. Thompson,	Asa Flemming,	Jacob Winter,
Wm. Bradford,	Thos. Gilpin,	D. Haworth,
N. Ball,	John Miller,	S. W. McCall,
J. Bundrum,	David S. Bowman,	Montgomery McCall,
Jos. Deford,	Charles Murrow,	A. W. Hobson,
J. M. Kirkbride,	Robert Hopkins,	B. F. Frederick,
Jno. Saylor,	Joseph Keeney,	Wm. Busick, Sr.,
Jno. Hayes,	James Philips,	E. Compton,
J. H. Finch,	L. D. Winchester,	John Wildy,
N. Reeves,	John Saylor,	J. Harris,
Wm. Cooper,	T. Mitchell,	H. Huntington,
Jno. McMahan,	Benj. Saylor,	John Baird,
Wm. Hughes,	H. D. Hendricks,	W. B. Binte,
A. S. Dean,	T. Campbell,	B. J. Saylor,
P. Wear,	G. Maginniss,	George Krysher,
E. Keeler,	J. C. Jones,	C. Stutsman,
Jas. Anderson,	J. Frederick,	D. S. Mearts,
J. Church,	R. W. Sypher,	C. S. Evans,
H. Everly,	Sam'l Kellogg,	Eli Keeler,
C. B. Myers,	Wm. Garrett,	George Oglevie,
D. L. Jewett,	W. F. Ayres,	Wm. Kuren,
David Norris,	John S. Dean,	David Miller,
Wm. Busick, Jr.,	Jacob Baycus,	James McRoberts,
Charles Kurey,	Solomon Bales,	Franklin Nagle.
R. A. Harban,		

Several other citizens' meetings, for the accomplishment of the same purpose, were held throughout the summer of 1848. The minutes of all of them have been lost. The last one, held a few weeks before the land-sales commenced at Iowa City, convened at the corner of Second and Market streets. The principal object of the meeting was the selection of an agent, who should represent all the claim-holders of Polk county, and bid off the lands of those who wished to pay for them in money. Such as desired to apply land-warrants in payment, could not do so until the lands had been open for sale a specified time, and to these persons it was all-important that their claims should not be sold until they had an opportunity to purchase them with land-warrants.

R. L. Tidrick was appointed agent, and a corps of armed men selected to accompany him, to protect him and the rights of the settlers in this vicinity from any injury on the part of other bidders, and to prevent those claims from being sold which the holders wished to pay for in warrants. These men were particularly instructed to use any means, however forcible and violent, for the accomplishment of their purpose, and as the guard were all directly interested in the result, their duties were likely to be earnestly and thoroughly discharged.

The claim-holders then made their arrangements with Mr. Tidrick, and he and his cohort departed.

These vigorous measures totally prevented any interference with the rights of the settlers of this region. The claims were all ultimately secured at the minimum price of \$1.25 per acre, and a period of general satisfaction, with regard to their homesteads, ensued.

The southern portion of Polk county was, in 1848, as now to some extent, infested with a few men whose reputation for honesty was of a doubtful character. It was supposed to be the head-quarters of a reckless and daring band of horse-thieves, whose depredations extended over

many adjoining counties, and were very vexatious to the early settlers. The supremacy of the law was not then very highly revered. The State legislatures had passed many enactments, and in some thickly-settled and well organized counties they were duly executed. But too frequently the laws, just and important though they were, failed to assert their supremacy. The power of the law was either insufficient to administer the penalties provided for its violation, or was wielded by those who were frequently in league with the malefactors themselves. Crime, therefore, often went unwhipt of justice, and justice deserved the lash herself. From such causes arose that assumption of judicial power known as lynch law—a summary process of redress and exemplary punishment, for which the records of many other new settlements afford abundant precedents.

A family by the name of Reeves, living at Linn Grove, near North River, were strongly suspected, and at length openly accused, of being connected with this gang of horse-thieves. Perhaps their guilt could not have been legally proven, but to the minds of the settlers there was very strong circumstantial evidence, amounting to almost positive certainty. What it was is not known; but, acting upon it, the settlers assembled, and proceeding to Reeves' house, commanded the whole family to depart from the country in a certain time, unless they preferred to bear the consequences of remaining, which were declared to them in terms far from agreeable.

Intimidated by these threats, the Reeves family, the male portion of which consisted of two old men and several sons, removed to Fort Des Moines, not at all to the joy of the citizens here. Soon after their removal one of the sons became engaged in a fight, and shot a man by the name of James Phipps, dangerously wounding him. Reeves was arrested, examined, and sent to Oskaloosa to jail, there being none in Polk county.

Subsequently the settlers on North River collected, to the number of sixty or more, and advanced, on horseback, to Fort Des Moines, determined to make another effort to rid the country of these marauders and insure safety to their property.

A report of their preparations was carried to Fort Des Moines, but before it arrived there it was exaggerated into the alarming intelligence that the town itself was to be destroyed, and all the citizens carried into captivity. It was said that some residents of the Fort, being in the vicinity of North River, were taken prisoners and killed, and that the settlers along that stream, still thirsting for blood, had marshalled all their forces to wage a war of utter extermination upon the people of Fort Des Moines. These reports wrought a great excitement among the more credulous inhabitants of Fort Des Moines, similar to the recent Indian stories. Col. Baker, with a small band of the most patriotic, marched through the streets, accompanied by the music of a drum and fife, beating up for volunteers, and imploring the people, by every noble sentiment, to rush to arms and defend their homes and property from the army of invading ruffians, who would soon be upon them with all the ferocity of hungry lions, and utterly blot out their lovely town from the face of the earth.

The more sensible of the people looked upon it as a farce, but Col. Baker and his command were determined that Fort Des Moines must and should be preserved, and that they would save the lives of the people in spite of them. They were content to bear the raillery of to-day—to-morrow would show who was right. So they sent out their scouts to see how near the enemy had advanced, instructing them to be careful that they were not captured, and hung to the nearest tree. These scouts not returning immediately, others were dispatched to learn, if possible, their untimely fate. Finally, after several days spent in enlisting men, procuring arms and ammunition, dispatching spies and

waiting for the enemy to appear, the whole affair turned out a hoax, just as did the late siege of Fort Dodge. Fort Des Moines was not to be assailed, its houses dismantled, its stores pillaged, men shot, women and children carried into hopeless and humiliating captivity. Nothing of the kind. It was only the Reeves, and who cared for the Reeves, after such an escape!

In about a week the North River men came, with the intention before spoken of. The Raccoon river was in such a low stage that it could be forded near its mouth, and on arriving there two of the men crossed over and proceeded into the village to ascertain where the Reeves lived—the remainder sheltered themselves within the heavy timber, which concealed them from view. They evidently expected some opposition to their summary proceedings from the citizens of Fort Des Moines, and therefore wished to take them by surprise. In this expectation they were mistaken. The residents of the Fort were not disposed to interfere with the removal from their midst of people of such character. The two scouts soon returned, having readily acquired the necessary information, and the whole force immediately crossed the river and galloped furiously into the town, raising a cloud of dust and a great excitement. They rode single file, each man swinging a rifle in his right hand, while with his left he urged his horse to the utmost speed. The parties they sought lived in a cabin in the outskirts of the town; thither the horsemen rode. Before reaching the house the road forked, one branch leading to the right, the other to the left. By preconcerted arrangement the foremost horseman took to the right, the second to the left, and so on alternately, in order that they might surround the house. Presley Reeves, seeing the horsemen, and thinking his time had come, took to his heels and endeavored to escape across the fields. His efforts were in vain, and the North River Rangers speedily secured him. They then told the family that they must leave immediately, not only the

town, but the country; that they had the force to oblige them to leave, and meant to do it. Their team was soon harnessed to the wagon, driven to the door, the members of the family and their effects packed in, *nolens volens*, and when all was ready the cavalcade marched back as they came, no one of all the bystanders offering the least opposition. These Reeves were escorted by this guard some twenty miles to the southward; they were then told not to stop till they reached Missouri, and the horsemen quietly dispersed to their homes. It would be well if all such outbreaks of popular indignation terminated so quietly, with so little violence, and at the same time were so successful in accomplishing the desired object.

CHAPTER IV.

The Perkins and Flemming War—Perkins Rides for his Life—Arrest of Flemming and his forcible liberation by his friends—His re-arrest—Efforts of the Mob to again set him free—Coroner Phillips turns U. S. Major—Coolness of Alex. Scott—Trial of Flemming—Perkins obliged to yield to popular demands—Erection of Court House and Jail—Holland Mob—Its Cause, Object, and Results.

In the spring of 1849, occurred what are called the Perkins and Flemming difficulties; which, arising from a subject particularly irritating to the settlers, threatened, for a time, to prove very serious. The difficulty at first sprung from a contention about land. Asa Flemming had made a claim a few miles below Fort Des Moines, and B. Perkins, a neighbor, endeavored to pre-empt it, and had actually filed his intentions to that effect. Perkins' fraudulent scheme being discovered, caused a great excitement in the vicinity, and many and dire were the imprecations invoked upon his head. It was also rumored that one Holland had been a partner of Perkins in the movement, and was to furnish the money with which to obtain a patent from the United States, but the truth of this report was never fully substantiated.

Perkins and Flemming were both members of the Claim Club, whose rules and regulations have already been given, and this circumstance, proving fully the perfidious character of the former, enlisted an additional hatred against him. Non-residents and strangers, the settlers expected, would encroach upon their rights. Such they were vigilantly watching, and were prepared to counteract and resist any innovations from such sources; but that one of their own citizens—one who was a member of an organization for the

mutual protection of all—who had bound himself to abide by the Club Laws, and whose interests, if jeopardized, would have been amply guarded from danger, should prove recreant to every sentiment of integrity, justice and honor, was unthought of, unexpected, and therefore, the more condemned and detested. Under the circumstances, Flemming easily succeeded in effecting a combination of the settlers residing near him, for the protection of his claim and to administer exemplary punishment to Perkins. The members of the Claim Club were all ready to assist, for the interests of one were the interests of the whole community. If Perkins should succeed in his plans, others would follow his example; a claim would soon be of no value, and a general disturbance arise throughout the county.

Mr. Perkins being one day found in the vicinity of the claim in dispute, the settlers, led by Flemming, resolved to wreak their vengeance upon him, and armed and equipped themselves for that purpose. Perkins, however, became aware of their plan before they could secure him, and on their approach, "stood not upon the order of going," but mounted a horse and fled at once. Several shots were fired at him without effect, and the terrified fugitive, flying for his life,

"Stopped not for brake, and stayed not for stone,"

until he arrived at Fort Des Moines. With a horse covered with sweat and trembling with fatigue, himself without a hat or coat, and almost frantic with the delusion that his pursuers were close behind him, he reached the Raccoon ferry, and eagerly besought the ferryman, Alex. Scott, to lose not a moment in crossing him over the river, into town, where he hoped to find a secure asylum from his blood-thirsty enemies.

Safely ensconced in Fort Des Moines, Perkins in a few days recovered from his recent fright, and growing valorous at the absence of his foes, and the distance from danger,

contrary to the advice of his friends, swore out a warrant to arrest Flemming, whom only he could identify, charging him with shooting with intent to kill. Flemming was subsequently arrested by George Michael, constable, and brought before Benjamin Luce, Esq., for examination. Luce's office was in a building formerly part of the Fort, situated near the "Point." Its site is at present occupied by a German grocery.

While Flemming was upon his trial, a mob of his friends, armed to the teeth, surrounded and broke into the office, carrying away the prisoner by main force, and bidding defiance to the authorities. Resistance to this mob, was not for a moment thought of. Probably the unfavorable opinion entertained of Perkins by the citizens of Fort Des Moines, led them to look with more lenity upon so dangerous and inexcusable a proceeding; but it is more likely that the absence of force on the side of the law, and the suddenness of the attack, rendered any opposition unavailable, and therefore none was attempted. Flemming, rescued from the bonds of the law, was triumphantly escorted to his home, with every demonstration of success and exultation.

He was afterwards re-arrested. Again did the mob endeavor to rescue him, but their presence was expected. When some eighty of them were seen on the other side of the Raccoon river, brandishing their weapons, and loudly calling for the ferry-boat to take them over, the good people of Fort Des Moines grew nervous with excitement, and nothing less than a battle was anticipated. James Phillips,*

* This same Mr. Phillips was somewhat peculiar in his ideas of the duty of a coroner. One story in particular is told. Two Indians visiting Fort Des Moines, got drunk, quarrelled, and one killed the other. The body of the murdered man was found, and Coroner Phillips sent for. He came, turned him over, examined him closely, and pronounced him dead. Some one suggested that it was usual to summon a jury to investigate the matter.

"What do we want a jury for? He's dead—dead as a stone. I know he's dead; you know he's dead, and Miss Hays knows he's dead. What,

then coroner, but, in the delirium of the exciting crisis, and perhaps stimulated overmuch by a few extra potations of brandy, styling himself a major in the army of the United States, proclaimed martial law in the town, and went around to all the stores, commanding the proprietors to lock up their houses, in order to save their goods from pillage, arm themselves, and be ready to act under his orders. Many of them did so. A large crowd collected at the "Point," where the band of insurgents could be plainly seen, endeavoring to gain a passage across the river, and could be heard uttering loud threats against every power, judicial, executive or military, in Fort Des Moines.

But by the coolness and intrepidity of Alex. Scott, the ferryman, their riotous project was completely frustrated. He calmly and firmly refused to take them over, while they retained their arms. They stormed, cursed, threatened; but not an inch would he let the boat go until they stacked their guns, and laid aside every offensive weapon. Unmoved by their threats, unprovoked by their maledictions, Scott resolutely adhered to his purpose, and finally the mob sullenly stacked their arms, and then, and not till then, were they ferried over the Raccoon.

Armed intervention was now no longer practicable, and Flemming was examined, the charge found true, and he was obliged to give bonds for his appearance at the next term of the District Court. However, he finally escaped, as the Grand Jury failed to find a bill against him. Perkins found his conduct, in reference to pre-empting Flemming's claim, so universally condemned, and himself the object of such

in the name of common sense, do we want a jury to *set* on him for, that's what I should like to know? They couldn't bring him to life."

"What shall we do with him, then," asked a bystander.

"Why *bury* him, of course, and then go home about your business," said the coroner, whose ire had risen at the suggestion of a jury. "Bury him, and let that be the last of it, for if ever I saw a dead man, he is one. Why, he is stabbed in a dozen places, any of them enough to kill him!"

general detestation, that he was glad to end the matter by executing to Flemming a bond, in which it was stipulated that the latter should have a warranty deed for the claim in dispute, so soon as a patent could be obtained from Government, upon paying to Perkins the sum of \$1.25 an acre. The execution of this bond finished all persecutions, suits, and riots, in this case, but Perkins was but little esteemed afterwards.

In 1848 the Court House was erected. The lot on which it stands was purchased by the county, of Thos. McMullen, for thirty-five dollars. The Court House cost about two thousand dollars, and was built by John Saylor. The Jail was erected in 1849, by Messrs. Shell & Guerrant, at a cost of seven hundred and fifty dollars.

Among the various mobs which occurred in this year, was the case of Holland.

Holland was traveling through the country, stopping at various places where his business demanded, and among the rest at Fort Des Moines. While here some malicious person reported that he was a speculator, and was engaged in selecting choice claims, which he intended to purchase. He was also suspected of being connected with Perkins in his attempted frauds. These statements, although false so far as is now known, being industriously spread far and wide among the settlers, caused no little excitement, and their exasperation soon raised to that pitch that a crowd of them resolved to give Mr. Holland a sample of pioneer justice, in the prompt application of that notorious branch of jurisprudence which Judge Lynch has the merit of originating. Holland was made aware of these inhospitable intentions, but he took it all very coolly, manifesting no uneasiness whatever. He cared not a whit for the mob, whether they were many or few, or however they were armed and infuriated. He was a match for them, and would meet them, and had no doubt they would go away faster than they came. They probably would not come near him

at all, but if they did, it was all right. He knew how to fix them. And so he did.

However, they came, a mob of fierce, determined, blood-thirsty men, bent on taking the most signal and exemplary vengeance on the unpardonable villain whose intentions were so detrimental to their interests, and who had audaciously ventured into their power. The infuriated crew numbered about thirty. Their oaths and murderous threats loaded the air with a pestilential burden. Surrounding Holland's house with a guard of armed men, to prevent the possibility of his escape, the ringleader ordered him to come forth and meet his doom, the doom of all men who should tamper with the interests of the citizens of Polk county, by any fraudulent schemes. As called for, Holland appeared, told the mob he was perfectly willing to submit to their will and pleasure, and requested the privilege of making them a speech. None could deny him permission, though many viewed it with impatience, and Holland, mounting a box that stood near, and gazing with calm, unwavering eye into the faces of his hostile auditory, commenced his vindication.

He was an orator, accustomed to sway at will the minds of an audience, and direct the feelings of his hearers into any channel he chose. With a voice whose deep, impressive, and skilfully inflected tones, arrested and held spell-bound the most careless listener; with language which clothed every thought, if imaginative, in the most fascinating garb; if argumentative, in an impregnable armor; and the mysterious, undefinable spirit of eloquence, permeating through and rendering irresistibly powerful every tone, word, and gesture, he stirred the hearts of the murderous crowd, impatient for his blood, and turned their sympathies enthusiastically in his favor. Their faces, before distorted with rage, were wreathed with smiles, not merely of friendship, but of admiration. Their hands, which lately had clenched with angry grasp the most deadly weapons, were

frankly extended to him, with all the kindness of intimacy and respect. At the conclusion of the speech, they all asked his pardon for the wrong they had, in the impetuosity of passion, conceived and nearly accomplished, and having assured Holland of their unfaltering attachment, they withdrew, in the best of humor, to the nearest grocery, where each drank a glass of whisky in commemoration of the occasion, the expense of which Holland, who accompanied them, generously defrayed.

CHAPTER V.

Incorporation of Fort Des Moines—Committee to Draft Town Charter—Boundaries—Election of first Town Council—Great Flood of 1851—Specimens of Dogberian Learning—Examples of new forms of pleading, made use of in the cause of *Corkeram vs. Davis & Brownlee*.

As early as 1850, Fort Des Moines became a place of especial interest on account of the probability of its being the future capital of the State. It was apparent that Iowa City would, in the course of a few years, lose this honor, and the State-house be removed nearer to the center of the State, and in this event Fort Des Moines was the only point likely to be selected.

On the 22d of September, 1851, the citizens of Fort Des Moines voted on the subject of incorporating it as a town. Only one vote was recorded in the negative. Hon. P. M. Cassady, Rev. Thompson Bird and L. P. Sherman, Esq., were elected to draft a town charter.

On Saturday, October 18th, the charter prepared by this committee was adopted by vote of the citizens. The boundaries of the town of Fort Des Moines were established as follows:

Beginning at the junction of the Des Moines and Raccoon rivers, at the center of the channel thereof, thence up the channel of the Des Moines river, to the point where the half-mile line of section four, township seventy-eight, north, range twenty-four, west, according to the United States survey, crosses said river; thence west along said half-mile line to the north-west corner of the south-west quarter of said section; thence south along the section line, between sections four and five, and eight and nine, to the center of

the Raccoon river; thence down the center of said river, to the place of beginning.

These boundaries were preserved until Fort Des Moines was incorporated as a city.

On the ensuing Monday, the following councilmen were chosen: Thompson Bird, M. T. Marvin, C. D. Reinking, L. P. Sherman, Reuben W. Sypher, Jesse S. Dicks, Hoyt Sherman, and P. M. Cassady. This council chose Thompson Bird, President.

In the latter part of May, 1851, the Des Moines, Raccoon, and all their tributaries, rose to an unprecedented height. The Des Moines was at one time twenty-two and a half feet above low-water mark. For three weeks it rained almost incessantly, pouring down from the clouds, as if the very windows of heaven were opened.

The Iowa Star of that date, says:

"Neither the memory of the oldest inhabitants along the banks of the Des Moines river, nor the memory of the natives, who resided here before it was settled by the whites, nor any traditionary accounts from the Indians, furnishes any evidence of such a flood having occurred here in all past time. The 'Coon and the Des Moines are higher by several feet than they were in the spring of 1849, which was the greatest rise of water ever known here up to that time."

The damage done to the farmers in the river bottoms was immense. Some were stripped utterly of their fences; fields under cultivation were washed into ruts by the violence of the water; all hope of a crop for one season being destroyed, not only by what was carried away, but by the *debris* which was left by the subsiding of the river. It was almost impossible to estimate the losses. Roads were rendered impassable—bridges swept away—the mails stopped, and traveling by land to any distance utterly vetoed. Houses were carried away, mills damaged, timber floated off, and all manner of mischief done by the flood.

Owing to the peculiar means which had been adopted to drain Fort Des Moines, the water was led into the town instead of out of it. The water was conveyed from the lower portions of the town up Second street, and finally through a rising ground into the Des Moines, just below the floating bridge.

To prevent the town from being submerged entirely, the authorities were obliged to stop up this drain, and keep the water out! This kept the element in *statu quo*. The river could not deluge the streets, which was well enough, but the streets could not discharge the torrents received from the hills, which was not well enough. However, no part of the then town was overflowed. East Des Moines was under water, to the second bank or terrace, and boats passed in all directions over the bottom. In all this destruction of property, it is gratifying to state only one life was lost. Three men, John and Conrad Youngerman, and L. D. Karnes, were engaged with a skiff, in quest of saw-logs, a short distance below the town, when, by an unavoidable accident, the boat was over set, and Conrad Youngerman, was torn away by the swift waters and drowned. He was a member of the Order of Odd Fellows, and highly esteemed in the community. The rest of the party with difficulty escaped a like deplorable fate.

The men who dispensed justice in the inferior tribunals of Polk county, in its primitive days, were not always persons of the highest erudition, either in law or grammar—more particularly, however, did they manifest a want of knowledge of the latter, as the following extracts will show.

They are copied *verbatim et literatim* from the original docket, therefore no one can doubt their authenticity. It is to be regretted that type can give no idea of the chirography in which they were written.

addison Cave

V. S.

parry ware, in a ple of debt on a note of hand of five

dollars and 17½ Cent. Summons Ishued on the 2 deCember 1847. Summons Returned on the 9 deCember 1847. the 9 day Set for trial and the defendent did not appear. therefore Judgement is Rendered by default for five dollars and 17½ Cents and Cost of Sute this 9 deCember 1847.

— — J. P.

deCember 24, 1847

exeCution on the above Judgement the 24 was ishued. ex-eCution Returned on the 15 Januer and no property found whareon to levy.

— — J. P.

Mortain Monahan

V. S.

Adeson MiChel in a ple of debt on an open a Count of twelve dollars and fifty Cents. Summons Ishued on the 21 day of Febary 1849, and Returned on the 1 day of MarCh 1849 and the plantf appeared and the defendent did not appeare and the caus being fully heard and it appeared that the defendent haS been duley Surved with proress tharefore Judgement is Rendered for the plaintiff for twelve dollars and fifty cents and costs taxt at \$1.67½

this first of marCh A D 1849

— — J P

State of iowa

Vs

Charles Myers in this caus the Defendent not put on his trial as it appeared that there would not be eney evedence against him.

— — J P.

This last case involves a new feature in the law-practice, and as such it deserves particular notice from those who wish to be versed in legal lore.

We now propose to give something of a later date, showing the astonishing advances made in legal knowledge in a few years, and the joocular spirit of some of our lawyers. The history of the case we here insert is briefly this:

William Oakes became indebted to various persons, in small sums, as naturally happens in the course of business, and among others to Reuben Davis and Wyatt Brownlee. Oakes went to Boone county to attend to a farm he had there, and while he was gone Davis brought suit against him by attachment, before Madison Young, Esq., and obtaining a judgment, an execution was issued, and Mr. Oakes' cow sold by the constable to satisfy the judgment. At this suit Mr. Brownlee was a witness. However, as it happened this cow was the only one Mr. Oakes had, consequently she was exempt from execution; and on his return he applied to Hon. Curtis Bates for counsel, who replevied the cow from the purchaser, Wm. D. Corkeram, and she was placed again in the possession of Oakes. Corkeram had paid sixteen dollars for her, which, of course, he did not wish to lose, and for want of better advice sued *Davis* and *Brownlee* (plaintiff and witness in the former suit), on the following bill:

February 21st, 1853.

Reuben Davis and Wyatt Brownlee,

To Wm. D. Corkeram, Dr.

To cash paid for a cow at constable's sale,	-	\$16 00
" costs of suits before Wm. McClelland, Esq.*		5 00
" keeping cow four weeks,	- - -	4 00
" expenses in prosecuting and defending suits,		15 00
Total,	- - - -	\$40 00

Davis and Brownlee were not, certainly, responsible because Mr. Corkeram chose to buy and keep a cow illegally seized and sold by the constable, but his attorney, Madison Young, Esq., thought otherwise, and the parties met for trial.

To plaintiff's petition, setting forth the grounds of his

*This was the suit in which the writ of replevin was decided against Corkeram, and Oakes obtained his cow. *Davis* and *Brownlee* were not parties.

claim the defendants returned the following answers. The reader, if at all versed in law, will perceive they are quite a variation from Chitty, Gould, and all the established authors upon pleading. Mr. Young was for plaintiff; Bates and Jewett for defendants.

DAVIS' ANSWER.

Wm. D. Corkeram	}	Before W. McClelland, a Justice of the Peace within and for the township of Des Moines, Polk county, and State of Iowa.
vs.		
Reuben Davis and Wyatt Brownlee.	}	

The separate answer of Reuben Davis to a petition filed against him in the above suit. And for answer to the charge in said plaintiff's account or petition first specified, defendant says: That the defendant never was a constable nor a deputy, nor did he ever officiate as one, nor did he ever directly or indirectly sell, bargain, or contract to sell, bargain or convey to said plaintiff any cow, bull, calf, steer or any other animal of that species, either as constable, deputy constable, sheriff, deputy sheriff, or in the character of any other officer, either judicial, ministerial or executive, or as a private person, for himself or anybody else, either as principal or agent.

And though said cow might have been sold,
And paid for in American gold;
Yet this defendant never did,
Either sell or take another's bid.

And as to the second account in said plaintiff's account or petition specified, this defendant for answer says: That he never was chosen either as plaintiff or defendant, in any suit at law or equity, which was tried before said Justice of the Peace, and if he ever was a party it was bald-faced meanness and transparent folly, not to inform him of it.

And that a suit could e'er be tried,
 And the parties never notified—
 Is clearly wrong—and this Court sees,
 That we are not liable for the fees.

And as to the third charge in plaintiff's account or petition specified, defendant for answer says: That he never employed said plaintiff to keep a cow for him; that he paid him for all the keeping of cows he ever did for this defendant; and lastly, that this defendant never had any cow that plaintiff could have kept.

And why this defendant should be dunned
 For keeping of cows he never owned,
 Or which he never agreed to pay,
 Is all submitted for the Court to say.

And as to the fourth and last charge in plaintiff's account or petition specified, this defendant for answer says: That he never employed said plaintiff to either defend or prosecute a suit for this defendant; that the last time he did employ him, he managed it so badly that he was not entitled to any fees, and that this defendant has paid him all his services were worth.

And to charge this party with that load
 Is not according to the "Code."
 And the only way we think to end it,
 Is to render judgment for defendant.

J. E. Jewett, Att'y for Davis.

BROWNLEE'S ANSWER.

Wm. D. Corkeram	}	Des Moines Township, Polk county, Iowa, Feb. 26th, 1853.
vs.		
Reuben Davis and		
Wyatt Brownlee.		

Now, as you see,
Comes the defendant, Brownlee,
And on his own hook defends—
Because he seriously contends,
That he is not indebted;
As by said Corkeram stated.

“Persons having adverse interests to plaintiff,

May, as defendants, be joined,” says the Code:
And to join those having unity

Of interest, is the true mode.

But Brownlee doth most seriously declare,
That he never joined with Davis in any affair;
And why he is joined in the suit now pending,
Is far beyond his comprehending.

Plaintiff's bill charges the defendants, sixteen dollars,
As cash, paid by him for a cow.

Which (as we gather from what follows),

He bought at a constable's sale, somehow—

When she was offered as the property of the poor man Oakes,
And being his only cow, the sale turned out a *hoax*.

That Corkeram in good faith, to the constable

His money paid, isn't denied;

Nor that the money was to the payment

Of Davis' judgment applied.

But what of that? This defendant was but a witness,

No party to the suit—

Though he fed, for a short time,

The old, dumb brute.

But neither this,

Nor the receipt of his fees,

Could make him jointly liable

With Davis;—if the Court please.

Nor is he liable to *Corkeram*,
In any event;
He therefore for costs
And for judgment!

Wyatt Brownlee, by his Att'y, C. Bates.

We need only add to conclude this amusing affair, that judgment was rendered for defendants; that the "poor man Oakes" kept his cow; that Davis kept the money he received from the sale of her, by the constable; and that Corkeram lost his sixteen dollars, which he paid to the constable; his four dollars for four weeks' cow-pasture; and his twenty dollars, alledged in his bill as expenses of sundry law-suits.

Davis and Oakes were the most highly gratified at the result, as one received payment of a just debt; the other, in satisfying the debt, found his property undiminished. To Cockeram, it is yet an inexplicable mystery, why, when he had paid Oakes' debts, he could obtain no relief at law!

CHAPTER VI.

Grant of Lands for Improvement of the Des Moines River—Extent of Grant—Decision of Stuart—Effect of contract made with Bangs, Bro. & Co.—Price of River lands raised—Indignation of the Settlers—River Land Meeting at Fort Des Moines—Resolutions adopted—Failure of Bangs, Bro. & Co.—Incident at Land-sales.

In August, 1848, Congress granted to the State of Iowa, for the improvement of the Des Moines river, the alternate sections of land in a strip ten miles wide, extending along this river from its source to its mouth. By means of this grant it was contemplated to make the river navigable as far as Raccoon Fork, by a series of dams or locks, twenty-nine in number, thus rendering Fort Des Moines accessible for steamboats at all seasons of the year. The river in its natural state was, and is, navigable only during from three to eight months. This important work was commenced with energy; but, from a variety of causes, it has been repeatedly suspended and delayed, until the present time (1857) only three locks are built, and these are rather a detriment than an advantage to navigation. It is to be hoped that the project will yet be completed, replete as it is with benefits to the residents of the Des Moines Valley. The grant, although understood to embrace all the alternate sections along the Des Moines, throughout its whole extent, were, in 1851, decided by Alexander H. H. Stuart, Secretary of the Interior, to extend only so far as the improvements were to be made: that is, only to the mouth of Raccoon river. By the unremitting efforts of the Iowa delegation in Congress, this decision was reversed and the intent of the grant established.

In 1851, the State having sold about \$150,000 worth of

lands, in the lower part of the Valley, a contract was made with Messrs. Bangs & Brother for the completion of the entire work. According to the terms of this contract, the price of lands below Raccoon Fork was fixed at two dollars, instead of one dollar and twenty-five cents, while those located on the river above the Raccoon were to be sold at five dollars an acre. The injustice of this unexpected advance in the price of the land, a great part of which settlers had claimed and improved, expecting to purchase on the same terms as Congress land, was apparent, and roused the indignation of the claim-holders throughout the whole Valley, more especially those above the Raccoon Fork, who could derive no direct benefit from the improvement of the river, as it did not reach them, and were to be charged the exorbitant price of *five dollars* per acre. Citizens' meetings were held at various points, and the indignant spirit of the settlers was made manifest by their proceedings, in the strongest terms. These meetings were not confined exclusively to the settlers upon these lands, but others who sympathized with them took an active part. The people generally, those upon the even sections, and those without the limits of the grant, feeling deeply sensible of the great injustice and wrong inflicted upon the settlers upon the odd sections, assisted these by all the legitimate means they could command, to enable them to secure their lands at a fair and reasonable price. To compel them to pay five dollars per acre, when their neighbors on the even sections only paid one dollar and a quarter, was anything but justice and equity. Nor was this the worst feature in the case. The legislatures, both Territorial and State, had invariably pursued the policy of encouraging the pioneer who should settle upon public lands, and enactments to this effect had frequently been passed. Even those in reference particularly to the river lands recognized the rights of the claim-holders, and made provision for them to secure their lands at the minimum price. Now, by the

terms of a mere contract, all these rights were to be denied, legislative policy changed, even-handed justice outrageously perverted, and the heaviest cost of erecting a work of general benefit to the people of the State, levied upon those to whom it would bring but slight advantages. These were the sentiments expressed by the various citizens of Warren, Polk, Boone, and other counties, along the line of the Des Moines. Much as they desired the improvement of the river, the public sentiment was unequivocally in favor of abandoning it if it could be constructed in no other way than by an act of gross injustice to so many industrious and worthy settlers. The voice of Polk county on the subject is expressed in the following account of a

RIVER LAND MEETING.

Agreeable to notice given, the citizens of Polk county convened at the Court House, on Saturday, the 10th inst. When, on motion, P. M. Casady was called to the Chair, and J. D. McLain was appointed Secretary.

The object of the meeting being stated by H. S. Buzick, a committee of five were appointed to draft resolutions expressive of the sense of the meeting: Dr. A. Y. Hull, W. H. McHenry, Jos. Hopkins, Wm. Murrow, and H. S. Buzick were appointed said committee. Said committee, after deliberating upon the subject, submitted the following preamble and resolutions, which were unanimously adopted:

PREAMBLE AND RESOLUTIONS.

WHEREAS, in the course of events it has become necessary for the people residing in this vicinity to speak out upon a subject that is now agitating the public mind in this section of the State, and Whereas, it is highly important that we should always identify ourselves with the right, rather than the popular; and Whereas, by the action of two accredited agents of the State, the rights of many of our fellow-citi-

zens have been sacrificed; and Whereas, we recognize as sacred and defensible, the right to freely canvass the course of all our public functionaries; and Whereas, all public officers should feel willing, at all times, to submit to the ordeal of investigating scrutiny; and Whereas, the General Government has made a munificent grant of land to the State for the purpose of improving the navigation of the Des Moines river to this place; and Whereas, a great majority of the lands so granted, which lies below the Raccoon Fork, has been sold at the *minimum* Congress price of \$1.25 per acre, and the proceeds applied to pay for work done at and near the mouth of the river; and Whereas, a large sum of money—say \$150,000—has been expended upon a portion of the improvement, and after all this, that part of the work is now “suspended,” which, when interpreted, means *abandoned*; and Whereas, the Commissioner and Register have entered into a contract with Bangs & Bro. for the completion of the work to Fort Des Moines, and have consented that the price of lands lying above the Raccoon Fork should be raised, for the time being, to \$5.00 per acre; and Whereas, a portion of those lands were, at the time of said contract, claimed and improved by persons who had gone upon the lands with the assurance that the right to enter their farms at Congress price would not be interrupted, or that they would at least stand upon an equality with settlers on River lands below Fort Des Moines; Therefore

Resolved, That we feel thoroughly convinced, from what we have learned in regard to the contract with the Messrs. Bangs & Bro., that the Commissioner and Register, though they may have acted in good faith, have been sadly overreached in the matter, have exceeded the limit contemplated by the Legislature—have exhibited a sectional feeling—have run counter to the rights of those hardy pioneers who have braved the inconveniences incident to frontier settlements, and whose just immunities cannot be *wheedled* away with impunity.

Resolved, That we tender our most lively sympathies to those claimants who have been thus robbed of their hard earnings—deprived of the enjoyment of the fruits of their industry—and placed at the mercy of strangers.

Resolved, That we can see no good reason why the citizens residing above Fort Des Moines should not enjoy equal privileges with those who reside below this place.

Resolved, That we would recommend to all persons who may feel aggrieved by the state of things as it now exists, to remain in peaceable and quiet possession of their homes, and we hereby pledge ourselves to assist them in every legal way in maintaining their just rights.

Resolved, That although we are extremely anxious to see our river put in a navigable condition, still we do not desire that the improvement be finished at so great a price as the sacrifice of rights of a respectable portion of our fellow-citizens.

Resolved, That we hereby recommend to persons residing in the Des Moines Valley to organize in each election precinct, and adopt such measures as they may deem expedient for the purpose of securing to each the right of entering his land at \$1.25 per acre, so far at least as those claims were made before the first of January, 1852.

On motion, the following named gentlemen were selected as Delegates to attend the meeting at the Rapids, in Boone county, on the 17th inst., viz: H. S. Buzick, Josiah Hopkins, and W. H. McHenry.

On motion, the meeting adjourned.

P. M. CASADY, Chairman.

J. D. McCLAIN, Secretary.

Happily all the fears of the settlers, in respect to their lands, were summarily brought to an end by the announcement that Bangs & Bro. had become insolvent, and consequently their inability to proceed further in the execution of the contract.

A disturbance occurred at the land-sales, on March 27th, 1852, which came very near proving serious to the lives of one or two persons. It seems that two men, named Murrow and Hall, both claimed a tract of forty acres, and each wished to bid it off. Hall commenced to bid, when Murrow attacked him with a heavy cane, striking him on the head, and causing a slight injury. At this treatment Hall became enraged, and drawing a revolver, shot several times at Murrow, wounding him in two places—in the thigh and side. Several of the bystanders narrowly escaped receiving the bullets intended for Murrow. Hall was arrested, examined before L. D. Winchester, Esq., and bound over for his appearance at court, in the sum of three hundred dollars. The Grand Jury, as in the case of Flemming, never found a bill against him, and he therefore escaped all punishment.

CHAPTER VII.

Establishment of U. S. Land Office at Fort Des Moines—Incident at Land-Sales—Incorporation of Fort Des Moines—Efforts to make it the Capital of Iowa—Their Success—Erection of Capital Building—Incorporation of the City of Des Moines—Its Boundaries—Kidnapping scheme of Meacham—War at Fort Dodge and consequent excitement at Des Moines.

A United States Land Office was established at Fort Des Moines in 1852. At the first land-sales the usual difficulties occurred about claims, and those possessing them had taken the precaution, which experience had taught was highly necessary, to organize themselves together, and uphold and defend each other in their rights, if they should be assailed. One man, by the name of Bates, had repeatedly made his boasts that no clique or clan should deter him from buying whatever land he chose. He had some money, he said, and as far as it would go, he meant to invest it in claims, just to teach the settlers that their combinations could not scare everybody from doing what was allowed by law. Language failed to express his utter contempt of claims, and claim-holders deserving special protection and regard. Government offered the land to the highest bidder; he should buy, therefore, where and at what price he pleased.

Such intentions met with such success as they deserved. As soon as the sales were commenced, (in front of where Sherman's Block now stands,) and a crowd had collected around the Land Office, and just as Mr. Bates was on the *qui vive* to bid off the claim of some honest settler, a party of men gathered around him, and partly by forcing him to walk and partly by carrying him upon two rails, conveyed

him down to the "Point," near the steamboat landing, where they kept him a prisoner the entire day, merely by standing around him, so that he could not get away ; and only finally released him on his solemn pledge never to interfere between rightful settlers and their claims. On making this promise he was set at liberty. Thus, without bloodshed, or even violence, but by a mere piece of pleasantry, his selfish plans were utterly thwarted, and protection guaranteed to the proper claimants.

In 1853 Fort Des Moines was incorporated by act of the Legislature. It had increased since 1851 in wealth, inhabitants, and commercial importance, to such a degree that it was deemed highly essential that its municipal regulations should be based upon a special and not a general law.

Great hopes were all this time entertained that Fort Des Moines would finally become the capital of Iowa. For this those of its citizens most interested in the advancement of the town continually labored. The views of the people of the whole State, except those on or near the Mississippi river, were strongly in favor of the proposed change. Accordingly, in 1854, a bill was introduced and passed the State Legislature locating the capital at Fort Des Moines. This bill was strongly opposed by the members from the eastern portion of the State, but notwithstanding their efforts it became a law.

It provided, however, for permitting the capital to remain two years longer at Iowa City, this proviso giving the representatives from the eastern portion of the State, and particularly from Johnson county, whose constituents were very desirous of allowing the capital to remain where it had first been located, the forlorn and vain hope of repealing at the next session a law which, however just and appropriate, was slightly contrary to their interests.

At the session of 1856, two years after, members from Johnson, and other counties opposed to the removal of the capital, arrayed their numbers and vigilantly watched for a

favorable opportunity to introduce a bill annulling all previous legislation on the subject. No auspicious moment came, and the session wore away without any changes being made or openly attempted. From that time the vexed "capital question" which had caused so much uneasiness, excitement, and debate, was considered immutably settled.

However, a subsequent feeble attempt was made, in the late Constitutional Convention, to submit the question to popular vote, outside of the Constitution, but was speedily defeated and abandoned.

In the meantime the citizens of Des Moines were not idle. A beautiful and commanding site, on the east side of the river, was selected for the capital building, and an edifice costing some \$65,000 erected, and, with an adjoining tract of ground, donated to the State. This was accomplished through an association of wealthy citizens of Fort Des Moines, who combined together in the expensive work. A particular description of the capital building is given in a subsequent portion of this book, and needs no further remark here than that it is an edifice worthy of the good taste and liberality of the citizens of Des Moines, and well adapted to its intended use. J. B. Stewart, W. A. Williamson, Jonathan Lyon, and various others of our most energetic citizens, were foremost in the project.

Some contention arose between the property holders on the west and those on the east side of the Des Moines river, in respect to the location of the capitol, the residents of each portion of the town being clamorous in their demands, and for a while it appeared probable that nothing less than *two capitols*, one on the *east* and the other on the *west* side of the river, would calm the excited property holders. But when the *east* side gained the much coveted prize and the subject was conclusively settled, it was gratifying, if not amusing, to hear the residents west of the river exclaim: "Well, we never wanted it, and never tried to get it on our side."

On the 3d of February, Fort Des Moines was incorporated by the Legislature, as a city. Its name was changed to the more euphonious one of Des Moines. Its boundaries were much enlarged, and now embrace the following limits: Beginning at the north-east corner of section two, (2,) township seventy-eight, (78,) range twenty-four, (24,) west fifth P. M., Iowa; thence west to the north-west corner of section five, (5,) township and range aforesaid; thence south to the south-west corner of section eight, (8,) in said township; thence east to the south-east corner of section eleven, (11,) in said township, thence north to the place of beginning.

In the winter of 1856-7 an incident occurred which proves that the spirit of insubordination to the law, once so prevalent here, is not yet wholly extinct. A most horrible murder had been committed in Powsheik county, and some individuals living in the southern part of Polk county were suspected of being accessory, if not principals, to the murder. A heavy reward having been offered for the apprehension of the real murderers, every one upon whom the faintest shadow of suspicion rested was vigilantly watched and every circumstance betraying the guilty parties carefully noted.

At length Mr. W. H. Meacham, of this city, whose name in days of yore, was a spell of terror to the horse-thieves of this region, and who has grown old, and even distinguished in the profession, if such it be, of capturing felons, determined upon their arrest. Accompanied by several other persons, he made a descent upon the suspected parties, and by dint of curses, threats, and brandishing of deadly weapons, succeeded in capturing a man by the name of Van Schoick, whom he fastened with a chain and forcibly took to Poweshiek county. Mr. Meacham was not an officer commissioned to make arrests, nor had he any warrant or other authority to justify him in his inexcusable course. He acted wholly on his own responsibility. In

Poweshiek county Van Schoick was pronounced not to be the man whom circumstances had identified as the murderer. Mr. Meacham had therefore kidnapped an innocent man, and after he had been detained in illegal custody for nearly a week he was released and told to get home as he best could, which was certainly very consoling.

But other evidence, or at least what was supposed to be evidence, having been obtained, again this bevy of men, who were officers *ad libitum*, burst upon the unexpected settlers, this time capturing Van Schoick once more, together with his father-in-law, Mr. Ridgway, and barely allowing them time to get their coats, they were put into a sleigh, threatened with death if they attempted to resist or escape, and borne away towards Montezuma. But from the intense cold, and the difficulty of reaching Montezuma on account of the state of the roads, after reaching Jasper county Mr. Meacham brought his prisoners to Des Moines, where he surrendered them into the hands of the Sheriff, and filed an information against them for murder. A trial followed, but the proof against them was of the most trifling nature and they were speedily and honorably acquitted.

Fear of falling again into the hands of the merciless Meacham induced Ridgway and Van Schoick to commence an action against their late illegal custodian for *kidnapping*, but it appearing to the Court that Mr. Meacham was a monomaniac on the subject of taking horse-thieves, and various other felonious characters, he was on this and similar facts acquitted.

From this time nothing of interest transpired until the siege of Fort Dodge, by the Sioux Indians. Many horrible outrages had been committed by roving bands of Indians, in the neighborhood of Spirit Lake, in the north of Iowa, and the heart-rending accounts of the massacres there had but just reached this city in an authentic form. While the stories of their barbarity were yet sounding upon every tongue, and commiseration for the miserable captives was

yet delineated upon every face, a messenger arrived, post haste, from Fort Dodge, bringing the alarming news that the Indians were approaching that place in force, and desiring a supply of powder to be forwarded to them immediately. Before the ammunition could be dispatched intelligence arrived that a large body of Indians, some two thousand in number, had completely surrounded Fort Dodge; that they had plundered the adjacent country, and were preparing for an immediate assault upon that place, and if help was not immediately rendered not an inhabitant of that town would escape the tomahawk or the scalping knife. Many doubted the truth of this last report, as it was not official, but every hour kept bringing proof after proof, till none but the most incredulous and unreasonable could deny that Fort Dodge was in danger. Settlers from the north, in utter consternation, gathered their families and a few most valuable articles together in a wagon, and fleeing for their lives, poured into Des Moines, and, as if doubtful of being safe even here, hurried on southward.

The pulse of Des Moines beat feverishly with excitement, and war seemed at her very doors. A few days might see the savages, reeking with blood and waving the gory scalps of the massacred inhabitants of Fort Dodge, ranging around the outskirts of Des Moines, and roaring their horrid and appalling war-whoop in the ears of our own valorous citizens. Or if this by no means improbable event did not occur, were not the suffering citizens of a sister village, anxiously turning their despairing eyes towards Des Moines for succor, and should they look in vain? Should the dauntless and adventurous spirit that burned strongly in the breasts of the people of Des Moines see their neighbors wantonly robbed, made captive, and murdered, with arms impassively folded instead, which should grasp the sword or point the rifle? Should the redskins longer pursue their accursed devastations with impunity? No! God forbid.

So thought all our most patriotic citizens. So thought

the worthy Mayor, and he began measures with commendable energy. A meeting was held at the Court House, the extremities of Fort Dodge detailed, the number of the invading savages stated, and the necessity, the extreme necessity, of immediate and vigorous action enjoined. Volunteers for the relief of Fort Dodge were called for, and a corps of men, ready to do and dare any and everything, speedily enlisted. Preceded by a drum and fife, and gathering accessions at every step, they marched up and down the town, halting now and then to listen to an inspiring speech or some scrap of intelligence, just arrived, which rendered the case still more urgent, and left no possible foundation for an unpardonable doubt.

Noon at length arrived, and the new recruits, nearly a hundred in number, were ordered home to dinner, with instructions to assemble early in the afternoon, for the election of their officers.

But all this while there were some who, in spite of all the accumulated evidence that could be offered, in the face of universal enthusiasm, and in the presence of impetuous and heroic chivalry, doubted not only the danger of Fort Dodge, but the existence of a hostile Indian in the State. Such doubting characters always exist. They have always been ready to doubt anything uncommon. Such doubters Columbus, Galileo, Faust, Fulton and Morse, had to combat. But they triumphed over these unbelieving wiseacres and won for themselves immortal renown; and so, thought the heroic sons of Des Moines, will we rise superior to the scoffs and sneers of these impassive, unsympathizing clods. Acting from generous and noble impulses, they undoubtedly thought,

"Grasp the shield, and draw the sword,

Lead us to this Indian horde,

Let us *conquer* them or *die*."

Returning in the afternoon, they were divided into three companies, and proceeded to elect their officers. W. H.

McHenry, mayor of Des Moines, was chosen captain of one, which was composed of those who were willing to march to the scene of slaughter, on foot. The re-organized Des Moines Guards, who made preparations to serve as cavalry, constituted a second. These were both enlisted mainly from the west side of the river. On the east side a third company was formed, and in all, the volunteers numbered one hundred and fifty men.

In order to learn more definitely the extent of the danger three scouts, Messrs. Scott, Polk and Thomas, were sent out, and in the mean time the various companies made every preparation to be ready to march to the scene of action on their return. Arms, of a miscellaneous description, ammunition, baggage, horses, wagons, tents, and all the paraphernalia of glorious war, were collected. An elegant stand of colors, painted by W. R. Wheeler, was presented by him to the Des Moines Guards, who vowed to carry it into the thickest strife of battle, defend it with their lives, and return with it decked with the insignia of victory, torn with battle-marks, and soiled only with the life-blood of the marauding savages.

But the enthusiasm and excitement had reached its height and was already declining. Counter reports began to be whispered around, and the ranks of the doubters received rapid accessions. First it was promulgated that the people of Fort Dodge were amply competent to defend themselves against any danger that should assail them; next that the savages there assembled were but a mere handful; and lastly, that it had never been attacked by Indians at all, or by any hostile force, and that the alarm from beginning to end was totally unfounded. As these rumors were circulated, their effect was speedily observed. Ardor cooled, chivalry evaporated, hopes of distinction on the battle-field trembled at first, then fled; and "all the pomp and circumstance of war" was speedily dispelled. Ere the next morning, it was authentically known, that the news first re-

ceived was wholly untrue, and proceeded solely from the excited imaginations of a few frightened settlers in the north. Thereupon the volunteers were disbanded and the sounds of peaceful industry, for one day suspended, were again resumed.

But the promptness and energy with which Des Moines responded to the fictitious news, and the ample preparations her citizens made to fly to the relief of a beleaguered town, eighty miles distant, abundantly prove the courageous soul and sympathizing heart which must ever animate her. What though from the circumstances of the case no drain was made upon her treasury, no martial service desired from her citizens, no sacrifice of life demanded on the battlefield? All these would have been cheerfully, enthusiastically rendered, if need had been, and will again be offered when the safety of the frontier is threatened by a savage foe. "Better be ready too *soon* than too *late*," is her motto, and for its adoption she deserves honor.

CHAPTER VIII.

History of the Des Moines Newspapers.

The IOWA STAR, the first newspaper printed in Des Moines, was commenced in 1849, by Barlow Granger & Co., and advocated Democratic principles. Shortly afterwards it passed into the hands of Bates & Johnson. Johnson edited the paper for some eight months, when he died, and upon Hon. Curtis Bates the whole control of the Star devolved for more than a year. From August, 1851, to May, 1852, Dr. A. Y. Hull was co-editor of the Iowa Star, when he retired, declaring that he could not live by politics. It is somewhat singular to note, that notwithstanding his opinion of the precarious rewards of politics, he soon after accepted a nomination as State Senator, was elected, and served his time. From May, 1851, until the spring of 1854, Judge Bates was sole editor. When he was nominated by his party for Governor, he retired from the editorial chair, since which he has devoted himself exclusively to the practice of his profession. He remained a partial proprietor in the Star until 1856. D. O. Finch, his partner, succeeded him as editor. From thence a rapid succession of editors ensued, and it is almost impossible to give them correctly. The name of the paper changed to the "Fort Des Moines Star," "Fort Des Moines Argus," and "Iowa Statesman." During all these mutations its political character continued unwavering. In January, 1857, Will Porter, the present editor, assumed charge of this paper, and its name was again changed to the "Iowa State Journal." Porter & Hedge are its proprietors.

Soon after the "Star" was commenced a journal advocating Whig principles, appeared under the cognomen of THE

FORT DES MOINES GAZETTE, edited and published by L. P. Sherman & Co. After being issued for a year, it was discontinued for want of an adequate support.

Immediately, however, Peter Myers & Co. commenced the STATE JOURNAL, a small paper advocating the same political tenets as the "Gazette." It bore up gallantly, for a while, but at the end of the year followed its predecessor into nonentity.

The "Star" then continued to be the only paper published in the county for about three years. In 1855 T. H. Sypherd & Co. started a Republican paper, under the name and style of THE IOWA WEEKLY CITIZEN. In 1857, T. H. Sypherd disposed of his interest to Mr. W. H. Farmer, who continues in charge of it at the present time.

Before relinquishing this topic, in justice to those whose enterprise, capital and talents have been engaged in editing and publishing newspapers in Des Moines, it is essential to mention the fact that they have had many and serious difficulties to surmount, some of which still exist. The most trying and unavoidable of these was the utter impracticability of procuring a regular supply of paper. Whatever was needed had to be procured at Chicago or St. Louis, and hauled by wagons, at least from the Mississippi, a distance of two hundred miles. Paper, as well as other freight, was often delayed beyond all endurance. It is only within the past year that the M. & M. Railroad was completed to Iowa City, which shortened the distance of transporting by wagon fifty miles, but even now little dependence can be placed on the arrival of any kind of freight. The papers, therefore, were often obliged to issue only a half sheet, and sometimes even none at all, for weeks at a time, while their supply of paper ordered three months before, was slowly performing its long and tedious journey to the press.

Skilful and efficient compositors and pressmen were also very difficult to obtain, and the files of old Des Moines

papers, which have been preserved, are by no means models of typographical accuracy, but exhibit the errors of the *tyro*, rather than the artistic finish of the expert workman.

Payment from subscribers was never demanded in advance. This was an error, and one that caused a vast deal of trouble. Probably this was more of an obstacle to the newspaper enterprise than any other. The present editors have wisely profited from the follies of their predecessors, and their efficiency and success result, in a great measure, from the adoption of the *pay-in-advance* principle.

Des Moines can now boast of two as large, ably-conducted, and well-executed weekly newspapers, as any issued in the State, and at a period not far in the future, when a telegraph to this city shall give us hourly news from the Atlantic States, and even the kingdoms of Europe—when business, now rapidly increasing, shall be sufficiently augmented, the public will demand a *daily newspaper*, and the enterprising publishers will not fail to meet the demand.

CHAPTER IX.

Polk County—General Summary.

Polk county is divided into twelve townships, as follows: Allen, Beaver, Camp, Delaware, Des Moines, Elkhart, Fourmile, Franklin, Jefferson, Madison, Saylor, and Washington.

POLK CITY is a fine and flourishing town, situated near the Des Moines river, fifteen miles north of Des Moines. It bids fair to rise to some importance.

DUDLEY, on the west side of the river, below Des Moines, was laid out in 1846. It is yet but a small town. In 1851, when the great flood was at its hight, it was totally overflowed. Jeremiah Church, one of the original proprietors of the town, is said to have escaped the raging waters by climbing a cotton-wood tree, where he amused himself, and delighted the finny tribes sporting beneath him, by the dulcet strains which he drew from his favorite old fiddle.

RISING SUN is a small village, five miles east of Des Moines, in the midst of a fertile prairie country.

Lafayette, Corydon, Mitchell, Saylorville, Apple Grove, West Liberty, Centerville, Hopkin's Grove, and Union, are small places, some of them only names.

At the Presidential election, held November 4th, 1856, the number of votes cast in the different townships of Polk county, were as follows:

<i>Townships.</i>	<i>Polls.</i>	<i>Townships.</i>	<i>Polls.</i>
Allen,	63	Four Mile,	106
Beaver,	48	Franklin,	42
Camp,	182	Jefferson,	287
Delaware,	62	Madison,	182
Des Moines,	1,097	Saylor,	117
Elkhart,	57	Washington,	28
Total in Polk county,	-	-	2,269

These votes were divided between the three Presidential candidates, as follows:

Fremont,	-	-	-	-	-	1,098
Buchanan,	-	-	-	-	-	888
Fillmore,	-	-	-	-	-	92

CITY OFFICERS, elected May 4th, 1857, whose term of office expires May 4th, 1858:

Mayor—W. H. McHENRY.

Councilmen.

First Ward—	W. A. HUNT, J. F. KEMP.
Second “	F. R. WEST, L. WHITE.
Third “	I. COOPER, W. C. BURTON.
Fourth “	R. L. TIDRICK, M. LAWRENCE.
Fifth “	J. W. STANTON, G. W. CONNOR.
Sixth “	H. H. GRIFFITH, J. A. WILLIAMSON.
Seventh “	W. A. SCOTT, J. HYDE.

On the eleventh of May the Council elected the following subordinate officers:

City Engineer—	B. Callan.
“ Treasurer—	Benjamin Bryant.
“ Recorder—	B. D. Thomas.
“ Assessor—	H. E. Lemoreaux.
“ Marshal—	W. Deford.

Street Commissioner, West side—J. McNamarra.

“ “ East “ Will Tomlinson.

TABLE, showing the amount and value of the real and personal property liable to taxation in Polk county, for the year 1853:

	Number.	Value.
Land, - - -	151,683 acres,	\$664,522
Town lots, - - -	639	92,764
Horses, - - -	1,415	67,073
Neat cattle, - - -	3,716	51,532
Sheep, - - -	3,090	4,537
Swine, - - -	5,137	10,722
Capital in manufactures, - - -	-	6,350
" merchandise, - - -	-	28,311
Carriages, etc., - - -	600	23,925
Moneys and credits, - - -	-	60,000
All other property, - - -	-	6,694
Total, - - -	-	\$1,016,409

TABLE, showing the amount and value of the real and personal property, liable to taxation, in Polk county, Iowa, for the year 1856:

	Number.	Value.
Land, - - -	313,557 acres.	\$2,498,532
Town lots, - - -		811,517
Horses, - - -	2,256	175,888
Mules and Asses, - - -	74	5,446
Neat cattle, - - -	6,788	26,172
Sheep, - - -	3,920	6,909
Swine, - - -	14,191	34,823
Capital in merchandise, -		87,367
" manufactures, -		46,875
Carriages, etc., - - -	1,031	48,828
Moneys and credits, -		204,482
Taxable household furniture,		9,229
Ferry Franchises, - - -		420
Total, - - -		<u>\$4,057,693</u>

Increase in the value of taxable property in three years,
\$3,041,284.

CITY CHARTER.

An act to incorporate the City of Des Moines, in Polk County.

SECTION 1. *Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Iowa,* That all that portion of the State of Iowa, included within the following limits, to wit: Beginning at the northeast corner of section two, (2,) township seventy-eight, (78,) range twenty-four, (24,) west 5th P. M., Iowa; thence west to the northwest corner of section five, (5,) township and range aforesaid; thence south to the southwest corner of section eight, (8,) in said township; thence east to the southeast corner of section eleven, (11,) in said township; thence north to the place of beginning—be, and the same is hereby declared, a city corporate, by the name of Des Moines; and the inhabitants thereof are created a body corporate and politic, by the name and style of Des Moines, and by the name and style aforesaid shall have perpetual succession, shall have and use a common seal, which they may alter, change, and renew, at pleasure; and shall have power to sue and be sued, plead and be impleaded, defend and be defended, in all courts of law and equity; to purchase, receive, and hold property, both real, personal, and mixed, and to improve, protect, or sell, lease, convey, or dispose of the same; and, for the better ordering and governing of said city, the exercise of the corporate powers of the same hereby granted, and the administration of its fiscal, prudential, and municipal concerns, with the conduct, government and direction thereof, shall be vested in a Mayor and Aldermen, consisting of fourteen members, to be denominated the City Council, together with such other officers as are hereinafter provided for.

SEC. 2. There shall be seven wards in the city, to be laid off at the discretion of the Council, three of which shall be on the east and four on the west side of the Des Moines river. The Council may change the limits of the wards when they think proper; *Provided*, That the number of wards east of the river shall bear the same proportion to those on the west, for two years from the passage of this act.

SEC. 3. That the said city shall be, and hereby is, invested as the lawful owner and proprietor, with all the real, personal, or mixed estate, and all the rights and privileges thereof, together with all the property, funds and revenues, and all the monies, debts, accounts, and demands, due or owing, or in any wise belonging to said city, or which, by or under the authority of any former act or acts have been acquired, vested in, or is or

may be owing or belonging to the town of Fort Des Moines, together with all the rights, interests, claims, or demands in favor of or against said town, may be continued, prosecuted, defended and collected in the same manner as though this act had never been passed.

Sec. 4. That the qualified electors of said city shall, on the first Monday in March, A. D., 1857, elect, in the manner following, the first City Council: In that portion of said city lying west of the Des Moines river there shall be elected to said City Council, by general ticket, eight Aldermen. On the east side of the Des Moines river there shall be elected to said City Council, by general ticket, six Aldermen.

At said election there shall also be elected, by general ticket, a Mayor for said city. The said Mayor and Aldermen so elected at said election, shall hold their offices until the first Monday in May ensuing, or until their successors are elected and qualified. The place for holding said elections, at said first election, shall be as follows: In that portion west of the Des Moines river, at the Court House—in that portion east of said river, at the Capital Building.

The said first election under this charter shall be conducted as township elections are now conducted by law. The returns of said election shall be made to the then Mayor of the town of Fort Des Moines, and certificates of election and oaths of office shall issue and be administered as is now provided by the charter and ordinances of said town. That the qualified electors of said city shall, on the first Monday in May, A. D. 1857, and annually on the same day thereafter, elect a Mayor, who shall have resided in said city one year, and the qualified electors of said city shall, at the same time, elect fourteen Aldermen, who shall have resided in said city one year, and the Mayor and Aldermen so elected, when assembled together and duly organized, shall constitute the City Council, a majority of whom shall be necessary to constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

They shall be the judges of the election returns and qualifications of their own members, and continue in office for the term of one year, and until their successors shall be elected and qualified.

They shall determine the rules of their proceedings, and keep a journal thereof, which shall be open to the inspection and examination of every citizen, and may compel the attendance of absent members, in such manner and under such penalties as they may prescribe.

And they shall meet at some convenient place in said city, on the second Monday in May; and, after taking the oath of office, before some officer qualified to administer oaths, shall elect from their own body a President, *pro tempore*, and when so convened they shall proceed to elect a Recorder, Marshal, Treasurer, Assessor, two Street Commissioners, City Engineer, and such other subordinate officers as a majority of said Coun-

cil may deem necessary, whose duties, term of office, and compensation shall be governed by the ordinances of the City Council, passed from time to time, and shall require from them such bond as they may deem proper, for the faithful discharge of the duties of their offices. It shall be necessary to secure a two-third vote of said City Council, to carry in the affirmative any proposition involving appropriations for any general purpose, or to grant the right of way to any railroad north of Elm street. Upon the petition of twenty-five property holders, in any one ward or wards, asking that any grade of streets or other improvement, or work of special public interest in such ward or wards, be constructed, the construction of which would require the raising of funds by special tax, it shall be the duty of the Council to order an election in such ward or wards, on the question of voting a tax on the property therein for the purpose of constructing such improvements or work. And if at such election two-thirds of the votes cast by the qualified voters are in favor of the tax, the Council shall proceed to levy the necessary assessment, and have the tax collected and the work constructed.

SEC. 5. That in all elections for city officers, it shall be the duty of the Mayor to issue a proclamation to the qualified voters of said city, setting forth the time of such elections, the place or places where the same shall be held, the officer and officers to be elected, and cause a copy of such proclamation to be posted up in a public place in each of the wards of said city, at least ten days previous to such election. And every such election shall be open between the hours of 9 and 12 o'clock in the forenoon, and from 1 to 5 o'clock in the afternoon, and shall in all things be conducted agreeably to the laws regulating township elections, for the time being. And it shall be the duty of the Judges of said election, within two days thereafter, to make out and direct the returns thereof to the Mayor of said city, at his office, in the same manner that election returns are required to be made by the Township Trustees, for the time being; *Provided*, That in all the elections for Mayor, the returns shall be made and directed to the President, *pro tempore*, of the City Council. And the Mayor or President of the Council, as the case may be, shall, within five days after any such election, open the returns which shall have been made as aforesaid, and shall make an abstract of all the votes, and file the same with the City Recorder, who shall make a record thereof in a book to be kept by him for that purpose, and the person or persons having the highest number of votes shall be declared duly elected. But if from any cause the qualified voters of said city, or any of the respective wards, should fail to effect any election, the Mayor shall forthwith issue his proclamation for a second election, which, in all things, shall be notified, conducted, regulated, and the returns thereof made as in this act prescribed, and the person or persons who shall be chosen at any such

second election, shall hold their office until the next annual election, and until their successor or successors in office shall be elected and qualified. And it shall be the duty of the Mayor or President, *pro tempore*, of the City Council, immediately to notify such person or persons who may be elected as aforesaid, of his or their election, by causing a written notice thereof to be served on him or them by the City Marshal, and every person so chosen or elected as aforesaid, shall, within ten days after his election, cause himself to be qualified to enter upon the duties of his office, and in default thereof the office to which he shall have been elected shall be deemed in law to be vacated, and it shall be the duty of the City Council to prescribe the time and manner, and provide the places of holding all elections in said city for city officers, and of making the returns thereof not herein otherwise directed and prescribed. And the said City Council shall appoint Judges and Clerks of all city elections.

SEC. 6. That each and every white male citizen, above the age of twenty-one years, who shall have been a resident of the city six months immediately preceding any election, shall be deemed a qualified voter of said city, and shall be entitled to vote in the ward where he may reside for Mayor and Aldermen, and such other officers as are in and by this act directed to be chosen by the qualified voters of said city, or of their respective wards therein, and all others which by public ordinance may be required to be chosen or elected, and when any person shall present himself to give his vote, and either of the Judges shall suspect that such person does not possess the requisite qualifications of an elector, or if his vote shall be challenged by an elector, the Judge of said election shall administer to the person an oath or affirmation in the following form, to-wit: I, A. B., do solemnly swear (or affirm, as the case may be,) that I am a citizen of the United States, and that I have been a resident of this city six months immediately preceding this election, and a resident of this ward, and to the best of my knowledge have attained the age of twenty one years, and that I have not voted at this election.

SEC. 7. That no member of the City Council shall be eligible to any office within the gift of the City Council during the year for which he may have been elected, nor shall any member of the City Council be interested, directly or indirectly, in the profit of any contract or job for work or services to be performed by the city.

SEC. 8. That the City Council shall provide for the times and places of holding their meetings, not herein otherwise provided for, which shall at all times be open for the public. They shall provide, by ordinance, for the election by qualified voters of the said city, of such other city officers whose election is not herein otherwise provided for, as shall be necessary for the good government of said city and the due exercise of its corporate powers, and which shall have been provided for by ordi-

nance; and all city officers whose term of service is not prescribed, and whose powers and duties are not defined in and by this act, shall perform such duties and exercise such powers, and continue in office for such term of time, not exceeding one year, as shall be prescribed by ordinance.

SEC. 9. That whenever the office of Mayor, Alderman, Recorder, Marshal, Treasurer, City Engineer, Street Commissioner, Assessor, or any other office in and by this act specified and provided for, shall become vacant by death, resignation, removal from the city or otherwise, it shall be the duty of the Council, as soon as may be, to appoint some suitable person, having the requisite qualifications, to fill such vacancy; and the person so appointed shall continue in office during the remainder of the term for which his predecessor was elected; and in case of sickness or temporary absence of the Mayor, the duties of his office, during such sickness or temporary absence, shall be discharged by the President, *pro tempore*, who shall be obeyed and respected accordingly.

SEC. 10. The Mayor, Aldermen, and other officers of the said city, before entering upon the duties of their office, shall take an oath to support the Constitution of the United States and the State of Iowa, and faithfully to perform their duty to the best of their ability. The oath of office may be administered by any person competent to administer oaths; the Recorder, Marshal, City Engineer, Treasurer, Assessor, Street Commissioner, and all other officers of said city, shall give bonds to the city, with good and sufficient security, in such sum or sums, and with such conditions thereto as the City Council may from time to time direct, and in all cases not herein provided for shall be allowed and receive such fees and compensation for their services, and be liable to such fines, penalties, forfeitures for negligence, carelessness, misconduct in office, and positive violation of duty, as the said City Council shall order and determine. It shall be the duty of said Recorder, to keep a true record of all official proceedings of the Council, which shall be at all times open to public inspection, and he shall perform all such other duties as may be required of him by ordinance.

SEC. 11. Ordinances passed by the City Council shall be signed by the Mayor and attested by the Recorder, and before they take effect shall be published once in one or more newspapers published in said city, at least six days. They shall also be recorded in a book to be kept for that purpose, and attested by the Mayor and Recorder.

SEC. 12. No member of the Council shall receive any compensation for his services, unless the majority of those voting on the question shall vote an appropriation therefor.

SEC. 13. The City Council shall hold its meetings at such times as it deems proper, having fixed stated times, and its meetings shall be public.

SEC. 14. The City Council is invested with authority to make and es-

tablish such by-laws and ordinances as are necessary and proper for the good regulation, safety and health of the city, and the citizens thereof; to levy and collect taxes on all property within the limits of the corporation which, by the laws of the State, is not for all purposes exempt, which tax must not exceed one and a half per cent. per annum on the assessed value thereof, and its collection may be enforced by such measures as may be deemed expedient; *Provided*, These measures be not more stringent and summary than those used for the collection of State and county taxes; to establish grades and regulate and improve the side-walks, alleys and streets, and to change the grade thereof, making compensation to any person injured thereby; to prevent and regulate the rolling of hoops, playing of ball, flying of kites, or any other amusements or practice having a tendency to annoy persons in the streets or on the side-walks, or to frighten teams and horses; to compel all such persons to keep the snow, ice and dirt from the side-walk in front of the premises occupied or owned by them; to build market houses, public halls, establish and support public schools, provide drains, sewers, public wells, wharves, landing places, and keep them in repair; and shall have the power to regulate, by ordinance, the keeping and sale of gunpowder within the city; to regulate and control the place and manner in which farm products, wood, coal, and other articles may be disposed of in the corporate limits; to license, regulate and prohibit all theatrical exhibitions, public shows, showmen, keepers, and other exhibitions for money or reward, auctioneers for the sale of goods, wares, merchandize, horses and other animals, at public auction, keepers of billiard tables, ball and ten-pin alleys, if the laws of the State are not interfered with; to license and regulate livery stables, carts, wagons, porters, draymen, and every description of two and four-wheeled carriages, and others who transport freight from one part of the city to another, and to limit their compensation; to provide for the prevention and extinguishment of fires, and to organize and establish fire companies; to regulate the fixing of all chimneys, and the flues thereof, which are now or may hereafter be put up; to prohibit hogs, cattle, horses, and all other animals, from running at large within said city; to provide against gambling, disorderly and indecent houses and conduct; to make all other ordinary, proper and suitable police regulations, and impose penalties for the violation of such regulations, which penalties may be collected by civil actions in the name of the city; and also to establish and keep up free ferries across the Des Moines and Racoon rivers; to require the property holders of any street to pave the same on the side-walks thereof, each in front of his own property, whenever the owners of two-thirds of the lots in such street, or part of a street, petition therefor; to borrow money for any object in its discretion, if at a regularly called election, under a notice stating the nature and

object of the loan, and the amount thereof, as nearly as practicable, the citizens determine in favor of a loan by a majority of two-thirds of the votes given at the election.

SEC. 15. That for the purpose of more effectually securing said city from the destructive ravages of fire, the said City Council shall have power and authority, on the application of three-fourths of the whole number of owners and proprietors of any square, or fractional square, in said city, to prohibit in the most effectual manner the erection of any buildings, or the addition to any building before erected more than ten feet high, in any such square or fractional square, except the outer wall thereof, shall be composed entirely of brick or stone and mortar, and to provide for the most prompt removal of any building or addition to any building which may be erected contrary to the true intent and meaning of this section.

SEC. 16. That the City Council shall have power, and they are hereby authorized to require and compel, the abatement and removal of all nuisances, within the limits of said city, under such regulations as shall be prescribed by ordinance; to cause the ground therein where watershall at any time become stagnant, to be raised, filled up, or drained; and to cause all putrid substances, either animal or vegetable, to be removed; and to effect these objects the City Council may, from time to time, give orders to the proprietor or proprietors, or his or their agent or agents; and to the non-resident proprietors, who have no agent therein, notice by publication in one or more newspapers printed in said city, for the period of two weeks, of all or any ground, subject at any time to be covered with stagnant water, to fill up, raise, or drain such ground at their own expense; and the said City Council shall design how such ground shall be filled up and raised, or in what manner it shall be drained, and fix some reasonable time for filling up, raising or draining the same; and if such proprietor, or proprietors, or agents shall neglect or refuse to fill up, raise, or drain such ground in such manner and within such time as the said City Council shall have designated and fixed, they shall cause the same to be done at the expense of the city, and assess the amount of the expense thereof on the lot or lots of ground so filled up, raised, or drained as aforesaid, and place the assessment so made as aforesaid, in the hands of the City Treasurer, who shall proceed to collect the same by the sale of such lot or lots, if not otherwise paid, in such manner, and under such restrictions and regulations, as may be prescribed by ordinance; *Provided*, the proprietor or proprietors shall have the privilege and right to redeem such lot or lots, within one year after sale, by paying to the purchaser or purchasers, the amount by them paid, together with fifty per cent. interest thereon.

SEC. 17. That said City Council shall have power, whenever they deem

it expedient, to provide for the establishment and support of public schools within said city, and pass all ordinances necessary for the good government and support of the same, and for the establishment and support of such public schools the City Council shall have power to levy and collect a special tax for that purpose.

Sec. 18. That all money raised, recovered, received or collected, by means of any tax, license, fine, forfeiture, or otherwise, made under the authority of this act, or which may belong to said city, shall be paid into the hands of the City Treasurer, and shall not be drawn therefrom except by order, under the authority of the City Council. And it shall be the duty of the City Council to liquidate and settle all claims and demands against said city, and to require all officers, agents, or other persons entrusted with the disbursement or expenditure of the public money, to account to them therefor at such time and in such manner as they may direct; and they shall annually publish, for the information of the citizens, a particular statement of the receipts and expenditures of all public moneys belonging to said city, and of all debts, due and owing, to and from the same. And the City Council shall have power to pass all such laws and ordinances, as may be necessary and proper to carry into effect the powers herein, and by this act granted.

Sec. 19. That the said City Council shall have the custody, care and management, of all personal, real and mixed estate, money, funds and resources, which from time to time may be owned by, or of right belong to said city, with full powers to purchase, hold, possess, use and occupy, and to sell, and convey the same, for the use and benefit of the said city and the inhabitants thereof. *Provided*, That the City Council shall not have power to sell any real estate belonging to the City of Des Moines, unless the qualified voters thereof, in pursuance of three days previous notice, given by order of the City Council, and posted up in a public place in each of the wards of the city, or published in one or more of the newspapers printed in the said city, setting forth the time, place and purpose of voting, shall, at such time and place, by a majority of printed or written ballots, express their assent thereto.

Sec. 20. The City Council shall make out a duplicate of taxes, in proportion to the valuation of the property of each individual in said city, on or before the first day of July in each year, to be signed by the Mayor, and countersigned by the Recorder, which duplicate shall be delivered to the Treasurer of said city, whose duty it shall be to proceed to collect the same within such time, and in such manner, as the by-laws or ordinances of the said city shall require, and to pay over the amount of tax so collected, upon an order of the Council, signed and countersigned in the same manner as is prescribed for said duplicate; *Provided*, That the said Council shall have power, on the complaint of any one

aggrieved, to correct, or amend any illegal or erroneous assessments before making out or delivering such duplicate to the Treasurer.

SEC. 21. The Treasurer shall have power to sell personal property, and for want thereof, to sell real estate, for the non-payment of taxes within said city, giving the purchaser a certificate of such sale; setting forth a brief description of the property so sold, and at what time he will be entitled to a deed, which certificate shall be assignable by endorsement thereon; but no real estate shall be sold for the non-payment of such taxes, unless the assessment of such tax or taxes shall have been duly notified by publication, for at least three consecutive weeks before the day when the said taxes are payable, in some newspaper published in said city, or by notice posted for the same length of time, in some public place in each ward thereof, nor unless the intended sale of such real estate shall have been notified in the same manner, and for the same length of time prior to such sale.

SEC. 22. All real estate sold under, or by virtue of Sec. 21, may be redeemed by the owner thereof at any time within two years from the date of the sale thereof, by paying the amount of taxes for which the same was sold, with costs of advertising and sale, and fifty per cent. interest per annum, upon the whole amount of such taxes and costs; but if any real estate be sold or remain unredeemed at the expiration of two years from the date of the sale thereof, the Treasurer of said city shall, upon the payment of the fee of one dollar to him, by the purchaser of such real estate at such sale, his assignee, or legal representative, make, execute, and deliver a deed of such real estate to the said purchaser, or his assignee, or representative.

SEC. 23. That the City Council of the city of Des Moines shall have the exclusive power of appointing Supervisors and other street officers, within said city, and of requiring each and every male person between the ages of twenty-one and fifty years, who shall have resided one month in said city, to work two days on the streets of said city, or pay two dollars in money as an equivalent therefor, and the said City Council shall have the power to regulate by ordinance, the time and manner in which said street labor shall be rendered; how those liable to work shall be notified; the periods of time between which such labor shall be rendered in each year. The inhabitants of the city of Des Moines are hereby exempt from working on any road beyond the limits of the city, and the said city is hereby constituted a road district.

SEC. 24. That the present Mayor and Councilmen of the town of Fort Des Moines shall have all the power and authority granted in this charter to the Mayor and Aldermen of the city of Des Moines, and the said Mayor and Councilmen are hereby authorized to perform all the duties prescribed in this charter, from and after its passage, until their successors shall be elected and qualified.

SEC. 25. That all the ordinances and by-laws heretofore passed by the Town Council of the town of Fort Des Moines, and now in force, shall be and remain in force under the charter until they shall be amended or repealed by the Council of the city of Des Moines.

SEC. 26. That the City Council shall have exclusive power to provide for works on streets, alleys, public grounds and wharves, and they shall provide for the collection and appropriation of such by ordinance.

SEC. 27. That all property and road-poll tax due from persons within the corporate limits, shall be paid into the city treasury; there shall be two road districts in the said corporation: one on the west side of the Des Moines river, and the other on the east side of said river; and in each of the aforesaid districts there shall be a Street Commissioner, under whose supervision all moneys collected for street and road purposes shall be expended, provided all moneys so collected shall be expended in the districts where they are levied or may fall due.

SEC. 28. The Mayor shall be the presiding officer of the City Council when present, and shall give the casting vote when there is a tie. In his absence the President, *pro tempore*, shall act as president for the time being. It is his duty to see that the laws and the ordinances passed by the Council are executed, and their violation punished; to keep the common seal, and to do and perform all other duties the City Council may prescribe, that are not inconsistent with law. He is, by virtue of his office, invested with all the powers of a Justice of the Peace, for the purpose of hearing, trying, and determining all offences committed against the laws and ordinances of said city, and shall receive the same fees that a Justice of the Peace would be entitled to in a similar case. Appeals may be taken from the decision of said Mayor, as in case of Justices of the Peace. The said Mayor is also hereby authorized to issue all needful process to arrest any offender against the criminal laws of the State, and shall proceed to try such person or persons, by the same rule that governs Justices of the Peace. He shall also have power to administer oaths and take acknowledgements of all instruments, and certify to the same under the seal of said city, and the same shall be valid in law.

SEC. 29. That it shall be lawful, until other provisions shall be made by the city authorities, to commit all offenders against said by-laws, ordinances, regulations and criminal laws of the State, to the jail in Polk county, or some other place provided by the City Council; and in case where a portion or all of the punishment shall be imprisonment, the keeper of said jail is hereby required to receive such person or persons, on the proper warrant of the Mayor, into his custody, in the same manner as in ordinary cases, and all the expense of said imprisonment, in cases where the same cannot be collected from the person or persons imprisoned, shall be paid out of the city treasury.

SEC. 30. On the trial of causes before the Mayor of said city, it shall not be necessary to empanel a jury, unless it shall be demanded by one of the parties to such suit, before it is submitted to the Mayor. The fees of the Marshal or jurors, in such case, shall be the same as allowed by statute in similar cases, for the State of Iowa.

SEC. 31. The City Marshal, within the city, in matters of a criminal nature, arising under the laws of the State, shall possess the same power, perform the same duties, and receive the same compensation as either constable in Des Moines township. He shall execute and return all processes, issued by the Mayor under any act or ordinance of the city.

SEC. 32. The said City Council shall have power to revise and remodel their by-laws and ordinances from time to time, and shall publish such revision, and ratification of them, in one or more of the newspapers published in said city.

SEC. 33. When imprisonment shall constitute a portion or all of the punishment of offenders against the by-laws and ordinances of said city, such offenders, on conviction, may be committed to the jail of Polk county, or some other place prepared by the Council, and the said City Council may make provision by ordinance for all such offenders to work out the fine and cost of prosecution, on the streets of said city.

SEC. 34. In all suits and prosecutions before the Mayor, where the city of Des Moines is a party, the Marshal of said city, or any constable of Des Moines township shall have the power to serve subpoenas, or other process, anywhere within Des Moines township, or to perform any other duty devolving upon said Marshal.

SEC. 35. When any tract of land adjoining the city of Des Moines, shall have been, or hereafter shall be laid out in town or city lots, and duly recorded as required by law, the same may, by a majority of the votes at any regularly notified election, be annexed to said city, and form a part thereof.

SEC. 36. That the said City Council shall have power to increase the number of wards, and Aldermen within the city, whenever, in their judgment, the exigencies of the city may require it. *Provided*, That the number of Aldermen on the east and west side of the Des Moines river, respectively, shall not be changed for two years.

SEC. 37. That this Act shall be taken and received in all courts, and by all judges, magistrates, or other public officers, as a public act, and all printed copies of the same which shall be printed by, and under the authority of the Senate and House of Representatives, shall be admitted as good authority thereof, without any other proofs whatever.

SEC. 38. That all acts, and parts of acts, heretofore passed, relative to the incorporation of the town of Fort Des Moines, and coming within the purview of this act, be, and the same are hereby repealed.

SEC. 39. This act shall take effect, from and after its publication in the Iowa Citizen, and Iowa City Republican, provided that no expense for the publication of this act be incurred by the State.

SAMUEL MCFARLAND,

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

W. W. HAMILTON,

President of the Senate.

Approved, January 28th, 1857,

JAMES W. GRIMES,

Governor of the State of Iowa.

DESCRIPTIVE SKETCH OF DES MOINES.

As has been already stated, the original town of Fort Des Moines was laid out in June, 1846. But its extent as then specified, comprises but a small portion of the present limits of our city. Its streets and squares have extended in all directions, and manifold additions have been made to the original plat, both west and east of the Des Moines river.

That part of the city east of the Des Moines, and formerly called East Fort Des Moines, was not, under the town charter, included within the corporation, but the city charter comprises both sides of the river. The eastern side is not so favorable, by nature, for a town site, as the western. The space between the river and the adjacent hills is narrower, and a considerable portion of the valley is low and subject, in time of high water, to be partly overflowed. There is a level stretch of ground near the bluffs that is higher, and were it sufficiently extensive would constitute an admirable site for a town. Still, buildings are being erected throughout the whole bottom, on the slope of the hill where the Capitol is located, and even beyond it. The whole hill side and valley, from present appearances, will in a few years be entirely covered with houses. Some of those now erected are very fine and costly.

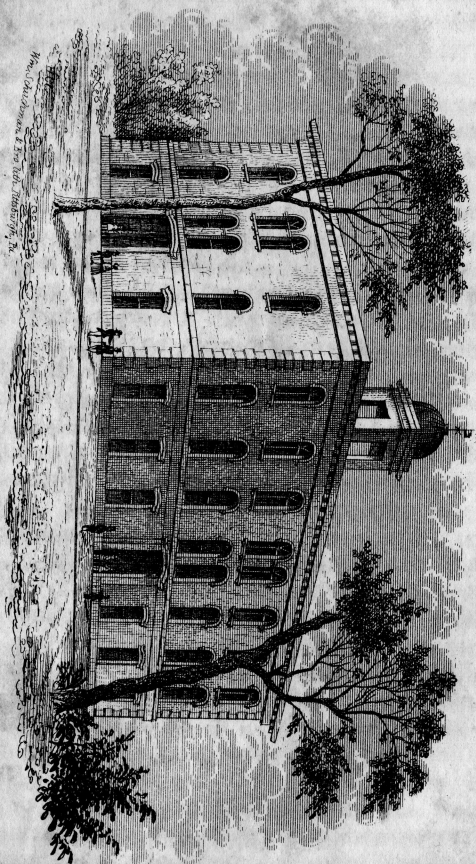
On the brows of the surrounding eminences are many very beautiful situations for suburban residences, commanding a view of the entire city, and the Des Moines and its tributary winding around it like belts of glistening silver. On one of the most commanding of these knolls the Capital Building is placed. Although its location has been the theme of much sharp contention between the various rival interests, on either side of the river, there is probably no

spot where it could have been situated exceeding in natural advantages the beautiful position it now occupies.

For the appended description of the State Capitol we are indebted to the columns of the Iowa Citizen:

"This magnificent superstructure was commenced last July, under the supervision of the 'Capitol Building Committee.' Messrs. Bryant & Hyde were the contractors. Below we give the dimensions of this edifice, as we have obtained them from a reliable source. This superb building is composed of brick, with the window sills and foundations of cut stone. The dimensions of the Capitol are one hundred and fifty feet long, and fifty-six feet wide. The first story is eleven feet and a half high; the second twelve, and the third eighteen feet. The Senate Chamber is fifty-six feet long by thirty-four wide. The Representative Hall is fifty-six feet long by fifty wide. The Supreme Court room is fifty feet long by twenty-four wide. The State Library room is thirty-four by twenty-four, and the State office rooms are each twenty-four by twenty-three feet. The building is roofed with tin, and the style of architecture is Ionic. The height of the dome is eighty-five feet. A bell has been contracted for, weighing fifteen hundred pounds. There is a fire-proof vault, the dimensions of which are nine by eleven feet. The building fronts on the public square on the north, and the city on the west, and will be entirely completed by the first of May, 1857. It will be a substantial and magnificent structure, and will reflect credit upon the enterprise of our citizens, and on our youthful, but flourishing State." [See engraving.]

The western side of the Des Moines is the natural site of the town, and a finer locality can scarcely be found anywhere. The table-land, so narrow on the east side, here expands into a beautiful and elevated plain, extending to the very verge of the river, and affording ample space for a city of fifty thousand inhabitants, ten times our present population. Near the mouth of the Raccoon the ground



IOWA STATE CAPITOL.

is somewhat lower, and several lakes, fed by springs, may be found; among the most extensive is Horse-shoe Lake, which covers several acres. It derives its name from its semi-circular form. Arrangements are in contemplation to drain these lakes, fill them up, and lay off the ground they occupy in building-lots. What is known as the "Hydraulic Addition" is situated in this quarter. This was a project to reclaim lots from the bed of the Raccoon river, and to force as much as might be necessary of the water of that stream to the summit of Greenwood Hill, west of the city, whence it might be distributed to any part of the city, by conduits, and furnish to the citizens at all times an abundant supply of water; a design certainly deserving of attention and support, if proved practicable.

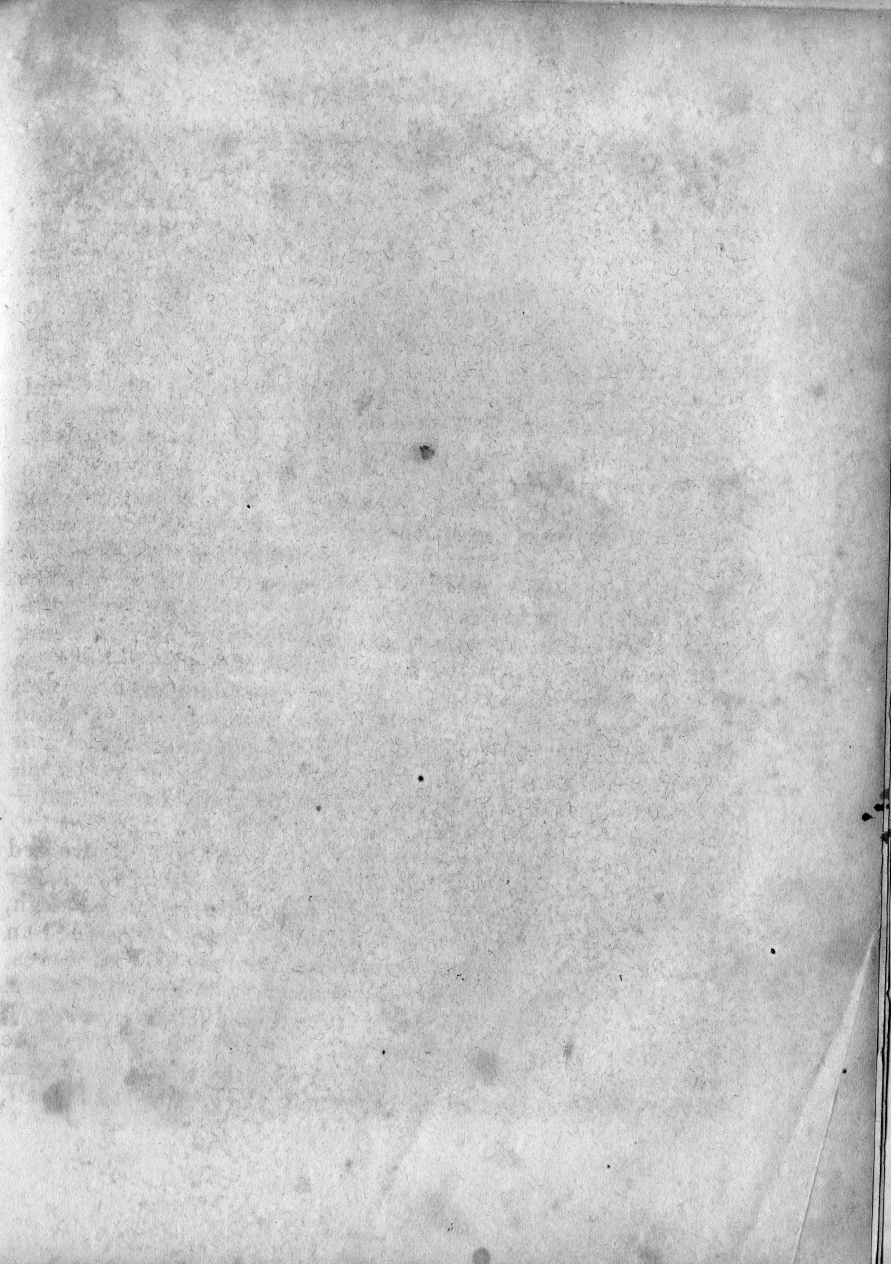
The dwellings which have been erected in times that are past are such as characterize new towns. Many of them are small, and constructed without the slightest reference to architectural taste, or even convenience and comfort. It is, however, a subject of congratulation that these rude structures are limited in number, and that the great majority of the buildings which have been erected within the last five years are such as would adorn the appearance of older towns than ours. Nearly every new dwelling shows the impress of neatness, and a correct taste, and many of them bear evidence to the skill and supervision of accomplished architects. For a city only ten years from *wigwam-age*, the beauty of our private dwellings and public buildings excels that of any town in the West. Any one after passing through our various streets and carefully noting the charming appearance of private residences, the taste and art displayed in churches and other public buildings, and then mounting one of the eminences which environ the city and surveying the whole area of streets and squares, houses and garden plots, in one comprehensive and inspiring glance, will concur in the opinion that for beauty of locality, regularity and neatness of appearance, Des Moines is

not surpassed, if it is even equalled, by any town in our flourishing State.

The stores are usually well-built brick or frame houses, large and commodious, and well stocked with choice selections of goods. Most of the business is transacted on Second street, but it is fast diverging into other quarters. All branches of merchandizing are well represented, and to enumerate even their different kinds would be a tedious and useless task.

Manufactories are yet in their infancy in our city. Coal is furnished from mines within the corporation limits, in inexhaustible quantities, and is of good quality for manufacturing purposes. The Des Moines furnishes an adequate supply of water power. A planing, sawing and turning establishment and sash and door manufactory is in successful operation, and doing a large amount of business. A foundry has been established, on the east side, and castings of every variety are made to order. Steam carding machines and cloth dressing, fulling, spinning and weaving machinery are also at work, and, under the superintendence of experienced operators, execute everything in that line in the best style. There are also a number of saw and grist mills, but not enough. For other manufactures our citizens are wholly dependent on the east, but from the advantages here offered, they will undoubtedly soon be established in our midst.

Sherman's Block is one of the finest and best constructed business buildings in Central Iowa. It stands on the corner of Third street and Court Avenue, is three stories high, with iron front, and cost \$25,000. It was completed in 1856. It is occupied on the ground floor by several stores, the Post Office, and Hoyt Sherman & Co.'s Banking-house. The second story is devoted to offices of various kinds, which it is unnecessary to detail; suffice it to say that the office of Hon. W. H. McHenry, Mayor, is one of them. The third story contains a large and finely furnished Hall,



used for public meetings, lectures, balls, concerts, &c. Here is also the studio of W. R. Wheeler, an accomplished resident artist of our city. The building is seventy feet long by sixty-six feet wide, high-roofed and covered with tin, thoroughly painted. It is decidedly an ornament to the city. [See engraving.]

Exchange Block, corner of Third and Walnut streets, was built in 1855, by an association of capitalists, and is the largest business building in the city. It is one hundred and thirty-two feet long by sixty-six feet wide, and three stories high. As its name imports, it is a place of trade, the lower story containing two banks, a drug store, hardware establishments, and two dry goods and grocery stores. The second story is devoted to various uses. Here is the U. S. Land Office, Des Moines Navigation Co.'s rooms, and sundry land and law offices, together with an eating saloon. Passing on to the third story, by various flights of stairs, there will be found a billiard room, Masonic Hall, Citizen printing office, daguerrean gallery, and Odd Fellows' Hall. The whole cost of this mammoth building was \$32,000. [See engraving.]

There are many other edifices of which the citizens of Des Moines feel justly proud, and which reflect credit on the skill and efficiency of our mechanics. The Court House, however, we cannot number among them. It was built some eight years ago, and however well suited for public purposes, and however costly and handsome it might have appeared in the eyes of the people at that time, accustomed as they had been previously to its erection to hold their courts and keep their public records in the log barracks vacated by the Garrison, it now presents vast and imperative scope and reasons for improvement. It is a shabby, inconvenient, ill-constructed and ill-kept building, and the Jail, if we may still call it by that name, is worthy of the companionship it bears to the Court House. Both of them should be torn down, and more convenient, handsome and

solid buildings erected in their stead. Public opinion already begins to demand it; the growth and business of our city and county require it, and ere long, it is to be hoped, it will be done.

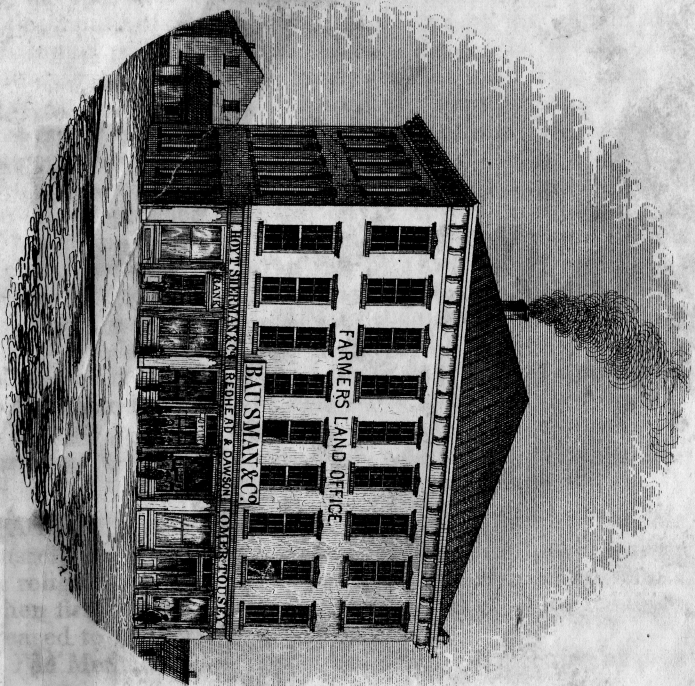
There are seven church buildings in Des Moines, in six of which regular services are performed. One is not yet entirely completed. Six are on the west side of the river, to-wit: Episcopal, Methodist Episcopal, Old and New School Presbyterian, Baptist, and Roman Catholic. On the east side there is but one house of worship, that of the Methodist Episcopal Church. There are various other religious denominations who worship in the large school house, Court House, and such other suitable places as can be obtained, until they are able to erect churches. Our citizens are truly a church-going, if not a religious, people, and the churches are, for the most part, large and neatly built edifices.

Part of the following statement in relation to the Churches in Des Moines is compiled from the Citizen, of March 11th, 1857 :

CHRISTIAN CHURCH—REV. N. SUMMERBELL, PASTOR.

THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH, in Des Moines, worships in the large brick school house, on the first floor. Preaching at 11 A. M., and 7 P. M. Young People's meeting at 3 P. M. Sunday School at 9½ A. M. They have also a Bible class and weekly prayer meeting. The Church numbers thirty communicants, the meetings are well attended, and the Church in a healthy and prosperous condition. They are making arrangements to procure a lot, and expect, the ensuing summer, to build a good chapel.

Date of Organization—Up to July 29th, 1856, there had been no meetings of the Christian denomination in this place. Elder N. Summerbell, then traveling, had two appointments in the Baptist church, but having made choice of this place for a home, the Court House, was procured for permanent meetings, for the time being, and on the 31st



SHERMAN'S BLOCK,

Court Avenue & 3rd

PHOTOGRAPH BOOK

of August, 1856, seventeen believers, having pledged themselves to receive the word of God as their only rule of faith and practice, were organized into a "Christian Church," according to the custom of the Apostolic Church.

EPISCOPAL CHURCH—REV. E. W. PEET, PASTOR.

The first services of the Episcopal Church, in Des Moines, were begun two years since in the Court House. Rev. E. W. Peet, of New Jersey, resigned his parish in the East, and by invitation of the wardens and vestry of St. Paul's parish, Des Moines, he took up his residence in this city, in the month of March, 1855, as Rector of the parish, and missionary of the Episcopal Association for the West. The gentlemen composing the vestry at that time were Samuel Case, Madison Young, Byron Rice, Hoyt Sherman, Wm. F. Ayres, John D. McCall, D. O. Finch, and J. W. Morris. The erection of a church was postponed in the hope that accessions would enable them to erect a church suitable to the future prospects of the city. But the inconveniences of having no regular place of meeting proved too great, and a church was begun in the fall of 1856. It is owned by the parish and occupies an eligible site on Seventh street. Besides this, the parish owns a lot—the gift of Mr. E. Hall, in Hall's addition to Des Moines, and a chapel will be erected on it the ensuing season. The present number of communicants is about twenty-five.

METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, WEST SIDE—REV. A. C. BARNHART,
PASTOR.

A Methodist Society was organized in 1845, by Rev. Mr. Russel, the Methodist Church being, as usual, the pioneer in religious enterprise. The number of communicants, when first organized, was nine, since which time it has increased to one hundred and fifty.

The Methodist Society on the west side occupy, at pres-

ent, the basement of their large brick church, on Fifth street. They have public services every Sabbath morning, at half past ten. Sabbath School at half past one, P. M., and preaching every Sabbath evening.

METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, EAST SIDE—REV. E. M. H. FLEMMING, PASTOR.

Previous to November, 1855, there was occasional preaching, but no church organization in East Fort Des Moines. At that time it was included in the Marion Circuit. In December, 1855, Rev. E. M. H. Flemming organized a Church (Wesley Chapel) with fourteen persons as members and probationers. This was the first church organization on the east side of the river. In the fall of 1856 East Des Moines was made a station, and in November of the same year the trustees began the erection of a church; and notwithstanding the severity of the winter, succeeded in completing it before spring. The building is neat and comfortable, and is eligibly situated on Keokuk street; seats free. The entire cost of the church and the lot on which it stands was \$3,000. Since the organization there has been a gradual increase, and the present number of members and probationers is forty.

METHODIST PROTESTANT CHURCH—REV. WM. REMSBURGH, PASTOR.

The organization of this Church took place on the 22d of May, 1856. The present number of communicants is sixteen. The Church has, as yet, no house of worship, but propose erecting one the coming summer. The present place of meeting is in Mr. Harrison Lyon's school house. Preaching every Sabbath at 10½ A. M., and also in the evening.

LUTHERAN CHURCH—REV. R. WEISER, PASTOR.

The Lutheran Church was organized on the 7th of July,

1855, with twelve members. Since then the number of members has increased to sixty. No church has yet been built, and services are held at the lower east room of the public school house. A lot has been secured, on Sixth street, near the residence of Dr. F. C. Grimmel, on which a large and handsome church will be erected, in all probability, the coming summer. The number of members is rapidly increasing, and the Church is in a highly prosperous condition.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, (OLD SCHOOL)—REV. L. D. DRAKE,
PASTOR.

The First Presbyterian Church, in Des Moines, was organized June 4th, A. D. 1848, with thirteen members. The organization was effected on the east side of the river, in the house of Mr. John Dean, now "The Capital House," by the Rev. Salmon Cowles.

The Church has never had a settled pastor, but has been irregularly supplied, for a few months at a time, by the Rev'ds McComb, G. M. Swan, and J. M. Lippencott. The present pastor elect, commenced his labors here in September, 1855.

At a meeting, held Nov. 24th, A. D. 1854, the Church was organized into a body corporate and politic, by the name and style of THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, of Fort Des Moines, Iowa, when Wm. Henry Leas, Moses Sheetz, and Abraham Dean were elected Trustees.

The present site for the church was purchased in July, 1856, for the consideration of \$1,200, on which a substantial brick house of worship, forty feet wide by sixty feet long, has been erected, and is fast advancing towards completion. It stands on Locust street, between Seventh and Eighth, and will be capable, when finished, of seating conveniently four hundred people. The estimated cost of the building is from six to eight thousand dollars. Services are at present held in the new public school house.

CENTRAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, (NEW SCHOOL)—REV. THOMPSON
BIRD, PASTOR.

In the month of October, 1847, the Presbytery of Des Moines, then comprising the whole State, sent the Rev. Thompson Bird, as missionary, to labor in Polk and the adjacent counties.

A Church of seven members, one male and six females, was organized, known as the Central Presbyterian Church of Fort Des Moines. One of the barrack houses was, for a while, the place of meeting, then the cabin of the minister and other private houses, till the Court House was built, which was the common temple for all denominations. From its organization to the present time (May, 1857,) there have been received by letters from other Churches and on profession, seventy-eight members. Death and removals have reduced this number to fifty-four.

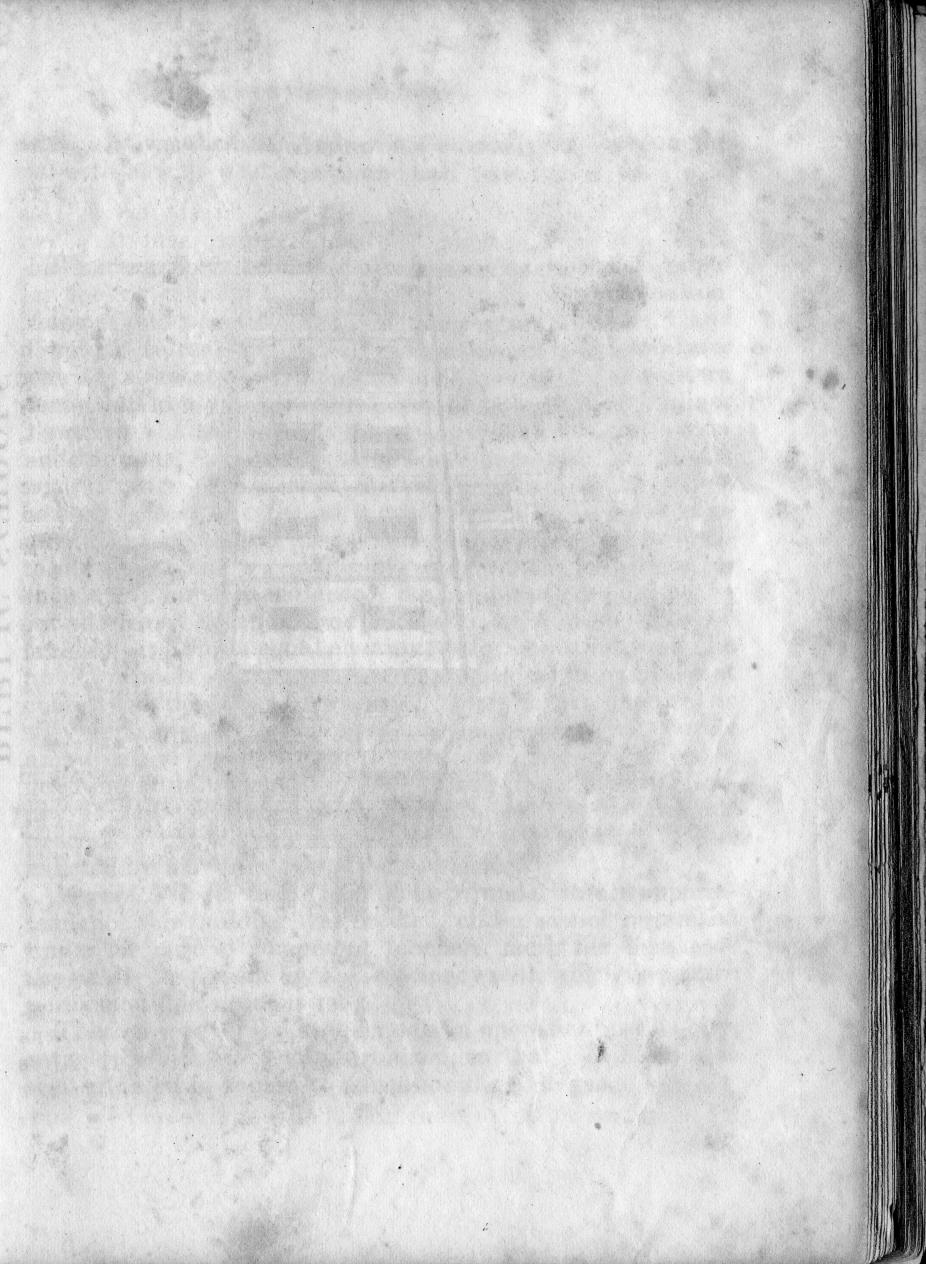
The church building, twenty-six by forty feet, was dedicated in January, 1855. The house was enlarged the following year by an addition of twenty-six feet. Regular services every Sabbath at 10½ A. M.

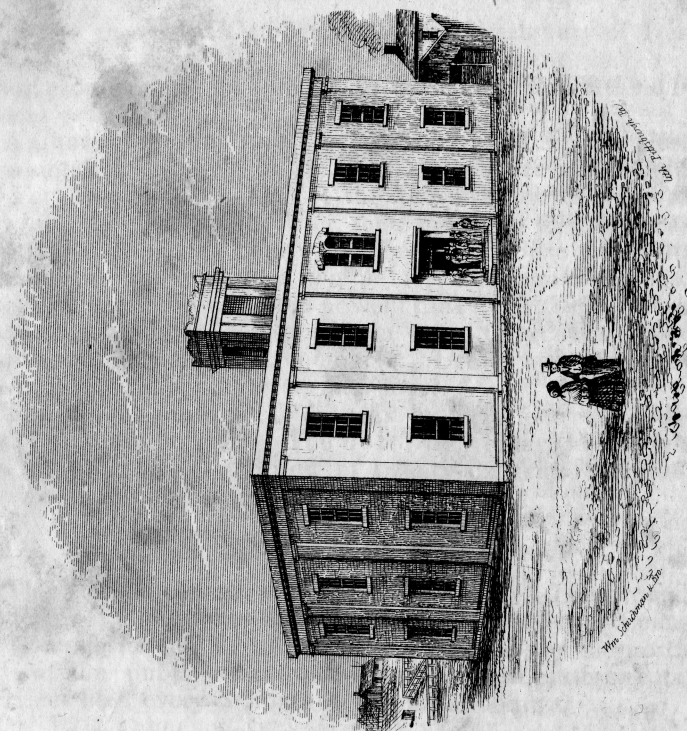
BAPTIST CHURCH—REV. J. A. NASH, PASTOR.

The Baptist Church was erected in 1850. The ground on which it is built was donated to the Church, by the County Commissioners, for this purpose. It stands on the north side of the public square, between Fifth and Sixth streets. Services held every Sabbath at the usual hour.

ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH—REV. G. H. PLATHE, PASTOR.

In 1855, Rt. Rev. Mathias Lorias, Bishop of Dubuque, bought the site for this church for seven hundred dollars. The same year a church, forty-three by sixty feet, was erected, at a cost of \$3,500. Since then an addition has been made to it, considerably increasing its size. Number of members at the present time, between five and six hun-





PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

dred. It is called St. Andrew's Church. Services on the Sabbath at half past seven, and half past ten, A. M.

SCHOOLS.

Wherever there are people from the eastern States, popular feeling manifests itself strongly in favor of education. Many of the inhabitants of Des Moines are from the "land of steady habits," and, as a consequence, good schools have ever been maintained, both public and select. The western portion of the city constitutes District No. 5, Des Moines Township. Until recently the public school buildings were not sufficiently capacious to accommodate all the youth, but the past year a large and well-planned brick school house has been erected, at a cost of \$8,000. [*See engraving.*] It contains four large study rooms, besides two recitation rooms, and is capable of accommodating with seats some three hundred children. As conducted at present, on the system of union or graded schools, by an able corps of teachers, it affords equal advantages for education with the public schools of any eastern city. Its usefulness is not confined to the primary branches, although they receive, as they certainly should, the greatest attention; but pupils ambitious of pursuing the higher branches are afforded good opportunities for doing so. The principal, J. A. Stickney, is a ripe scholar and understands well that mysterious process of "teaching the young idea how to shoot." He is assisted by four able subordinate teachers.

Messrs. White, Smith, and Elliott, under whose superintendence this building was erected, and a school organized under the care of competent teachers, merit the thanks of the public for the energy and efficiency with which they have performed this arduous task.

There are several select schools in operation in this city, some of which are well patronized, so that Des Moines is well situated in regard to educational privileges.

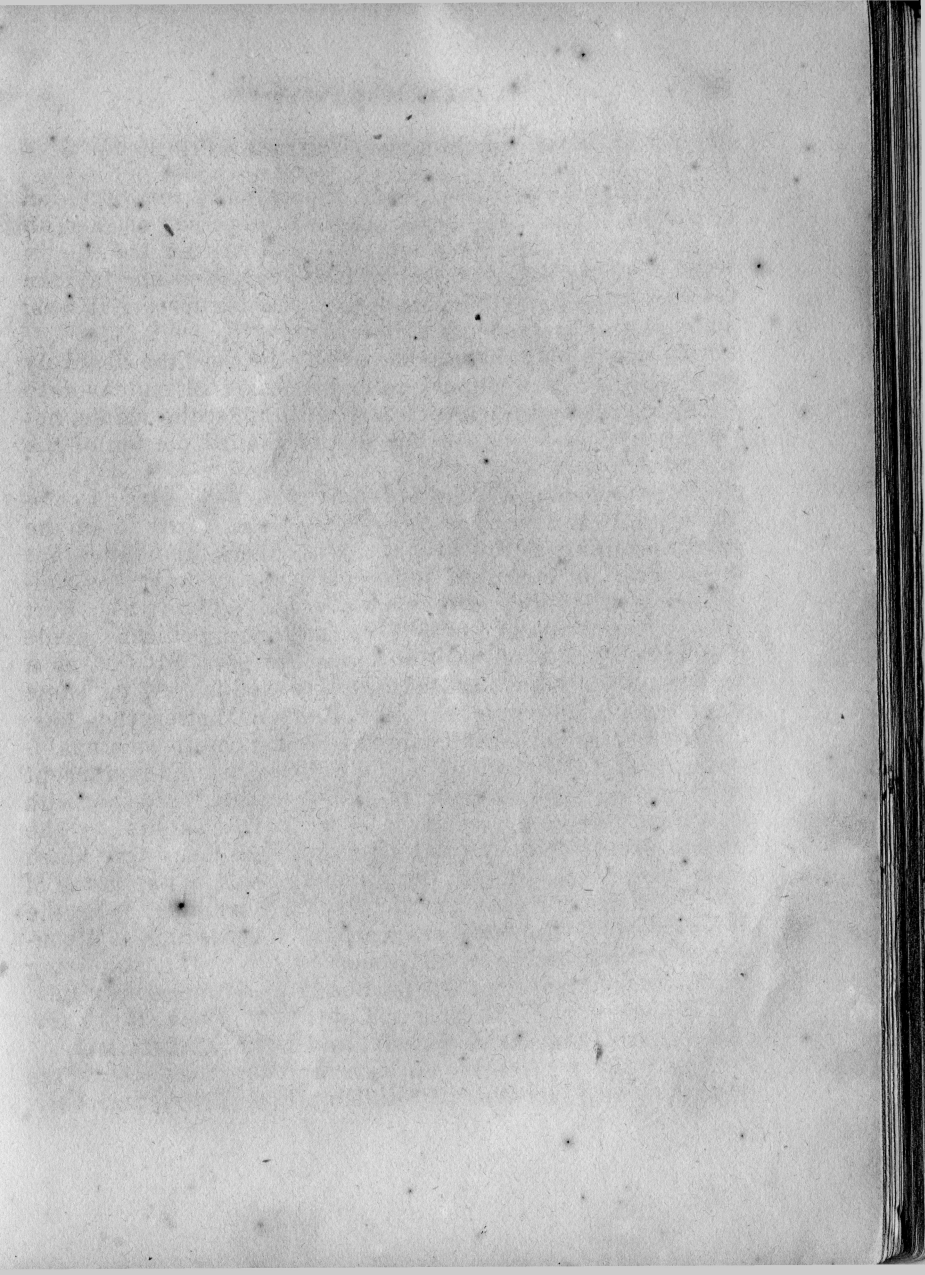
IOWA CENTRAL COLLEGE.

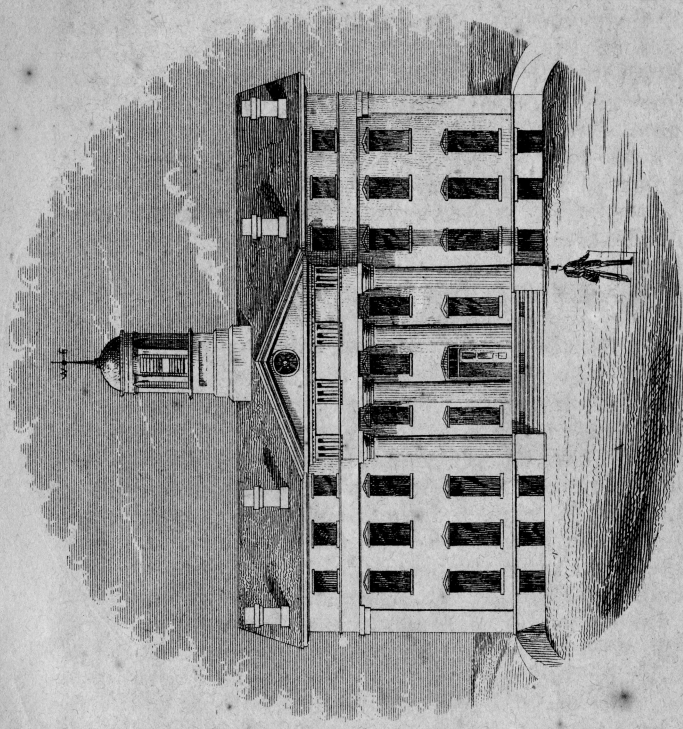
This Institution arose from the wants of the Lutheran Church in Iowa. The importance and necessity of such an institution had long been talked of and written about. In May, 1855, a Conference of Lutheran ministers and laymen was held at Knoxville, Iowa. At this Conference it was, after mature and solemn deliberation,

"Resolved, That in reliance upon God, and the liberality of the people of Iowa, we do found, and will endeavor to build up, an institution of learning, to meet the wants, not only of our own people, but of the central portion of the State of Iowa."

This resolution, having been unanimously passed, a committee was appointed to issue proposals to towns in the central portion of Iowa for its location, and the town that could offer the strongest inducement should have the College. Great efforts were made in several towns. Fort Des Moines, through some of its enterprising citizens, made the most eligible offer. She agreed to give \$10,000 as a building fund alone, and has far exceeded it. At the same meeting (in Knoxville) the Rev. Reuben Weiser, then pastor of a large Lutheran charge in Pennsylvania, was unanimously elected President of the College, but did not accept the appointment until July. In November, 1855, he, with his family, became residents of Fort Des Moines. The subscription list of the building fund has been very much increased by his efforts. At a meeting held at the house of Dr. F. C. Grimmel, on the 23d day of November, 1855, the first Board of Trustees was appointed, according to a constitution that had previously been adopted. The following gentlemen composed the first Board of Trustees, viz: Rev. R. Weiser, Rev. F. R. Sherer, Capt. F. R. West, R. W. Sypher, Esq., Hon. P. M. Casady, and Dr. F. C. Grimmel.

The following gentlemen were appointed officers of the Board, viz: F. R. West, President; F. A. Tritle, Secretary;





IOWA CENTRAL COLLEGE.

R. W. Sypher, Treasurer. At the same meeting a committee, consisting of P. M. Casady, F. A. Tritle, and Rev. R. Weiser, was appointed to procure from the Legislature of Iowa a college charter. This charter was subsequently procured, presented to and accepted by the Board of Trustees, so this Institution is now fully incorporated and possesses all the powers and privileges of colleges generally. At the same meeting a committee was appointed to select and procure a site for the College. A beautiful position in the western part of the city was secured, consisting of a tract of five acres, which was bought for fifteen hundred dollars, and on it the erection of the college building was soon commenced. The corner stone was laid, with appropriate ceremonies, on the 22d of May, 1856, on which occasion an able and impressive address was delivered by Rev. F. W. Conrad, of Dayton, Ohio. Eight hundred dollars were added to the subscription fund at that time. The work of rearing the college edifice continued during the summer and autumn of 1856, but owing to the scarcity of lumber and early period at which cold weather commenced, it was not finished. In the spring of 1857 work was again resumed upon it, and it is expected that it will be completed the present summer, and be ready for the reception of students in October. Its present progress, although to some extent made under unfavorable circumstances, is highly creditable to the energy of its officers, and particularly the worthy President, who has spared no pains or efforts in its behalf, and gratifying to friends who are interested deeply in its success. The magnificent edifice, which so proudly overlooks our city, speaks volumes in praise of the liberality and public spirit that created it, and from its past history and present appearance the Iowa Central College is destined to a useful and glorious future. [See engraving.]

The Board of Trustees consists of twenty-one members, as follows:

TRUSTEES OF IOWA CENTRAL COLLEGE.

Capt. F. R. West,	Des Moines, Iowa.
Rev. Prof. R. Weiser,	" "
R. W. Sypher,	" "
Dr. F. C. Grimmell,	" "
Dr. T. K. Brooks,	" "
Dr. H. C. Grimmell,	" "
F. A. Trittle,	" "
J. B. Zeigler,	" "
P. M. Casady,	" "
Rev. T. Bird,	" "
Madison Young,	" "
Rev. F. R. Sherer,	Lyons, "
" G. W. Shaffer,	Winchester, "
" Solomon Ritz,	Tipton, "
" J. G. Shaffer,	Salem, "
Hon. Judge Townson,	Farmington, "
George Schruman,	" "
Rev. J. A. Roof,	" "
B. Lehman,	Albia, "
Wm. M. Allison,	Eddyville, "
J. M. Waters,	Knoxville, "

OFFICERS OF THE BOARD.

Capt. F. R. West, President.
 R. W. Sypher, Esq., Treasurer.
 F. A. Trittle, Esq., Secretary.

FACULTY.

Rev. R. Weiser, President, and Professor of Moral Science and Natural History.

DES MOINES LITERARY ASSOCIATION.

This Association was organized in October, 1855. Since that time regular courses of lectures have been delivered each winter. Those delivered during the winter of 1856-7 are these :

1. Rev. R. Weiser, Subject: Astronomy.
2. Hon. Wm. Phillips, " Electricity.
3. F. D. Rickerson, " English Literature in the Elizabethan Age.
4. Will Porter, " Types of Mankind.
5. Rev. E. W. Peet, " The Inquisition.
6. Dr. A. Y. Hull, " Do the signs of the times indicate the subversion of our Government?
7. J. H. Gray, Subject: Ben Franklin and Young America.
8. J. H. L. Scott, " The social position and destiny of Mankind.
9. John A. Grow, " The Dignity of Labor.
10. T. H. Sypherd, " Who reads an American Book?

The present officers of the Association are:

Rev. R. Weiser, President.

Hon. P. M. Casady, 1st Vice President.

Hoyt Sherman, 2nd Vice President.

Hon. C. W. Nash, Recording Secretary.

S. H. Elbert, Corresponding Secretary.

H. C. Nutt, Treasurer.

C. W. Nash, P. M. Casady, W. J. Gatling, Committee on Lectures.

POST OFFICE—WESLEY REDHEAD, P. M.

The Post Office in Des Moines receives three and a half tons of mail matter weekly. It contains five hundred and seventy-six boxes and eighty drawers. Five hundred newspapers are taken, weekly, by subscribers, including the county papers. At least thirty-eight thousand letters are received every quarter, and about that number sent out in the same time.

The Post Office is situated in Sherman's Block, and occupies a room seventy-six feet long by twenty-two feet wide. It is one of the best regulated, as well as one of the most important offices in the State.

FREE MASONS, ODD FELLOWS, SONS OF TEMPERANCE, ETC.

Pioneer Lodge, No. 22, A. F. & A. Masons, meets in Exchange Block, third story. The charter dates from June 3d, 1851. The present number of members is nearly one hundred. Regular communication, the Saturday evening on or before the full moon. The officers of the Lodge are: W. T. Smith, W. M.; Lovell White, S. W.; W. C. Buzick, J. W.; H. S. Buzick, S. D.; Thomas Boyd, J. D.; Henry Courtney, Treasurer; J. W. Bradshaw, Secretary; Bennett Angel, Tyler.

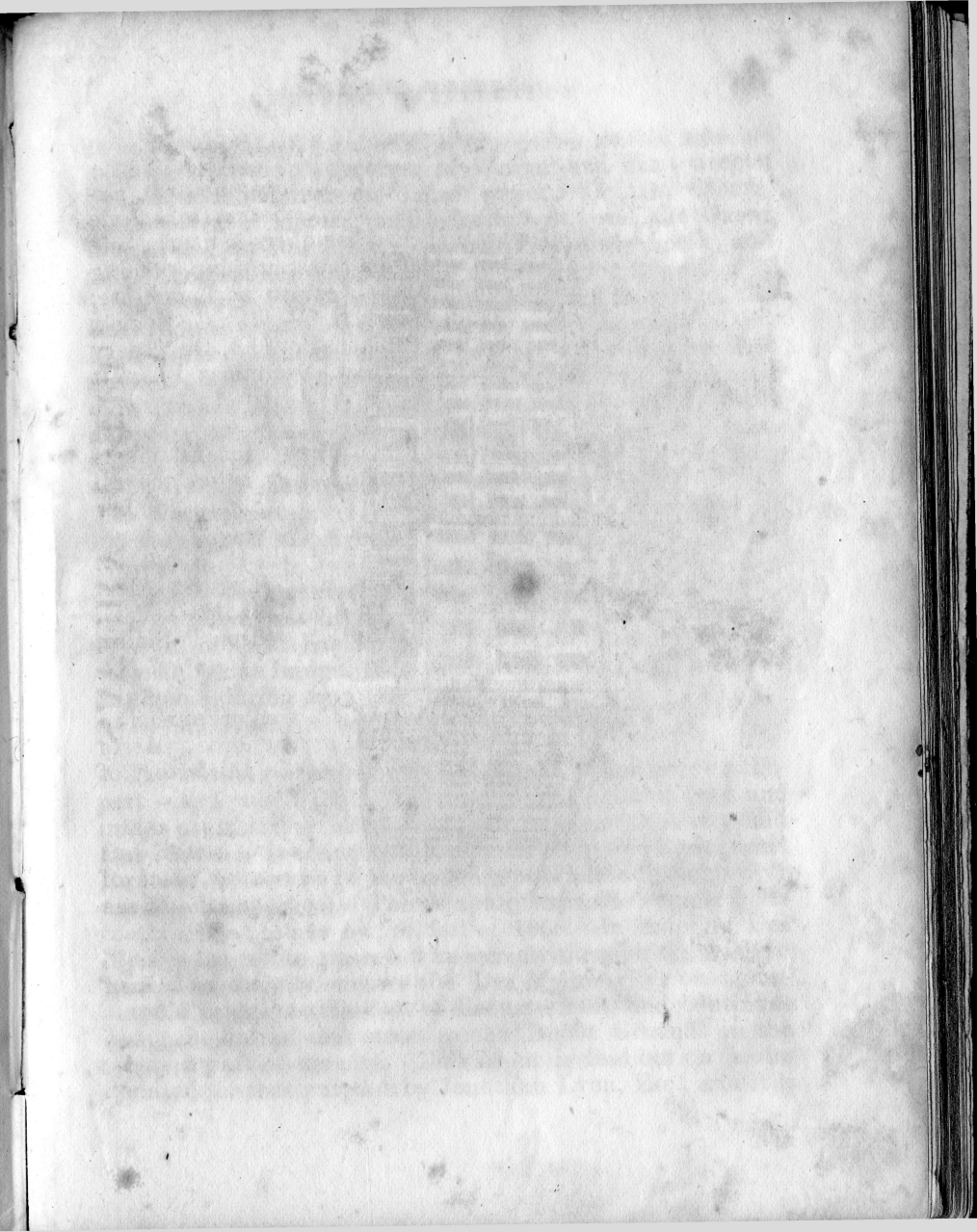
Corinthian Chapter, No. 14, Royal Arch Masons, meets in Masonic Hall, the Thursday evening on or before the full moon. Dispensation granted June 13th, 1856. Number of members twenty-six. Present officers:

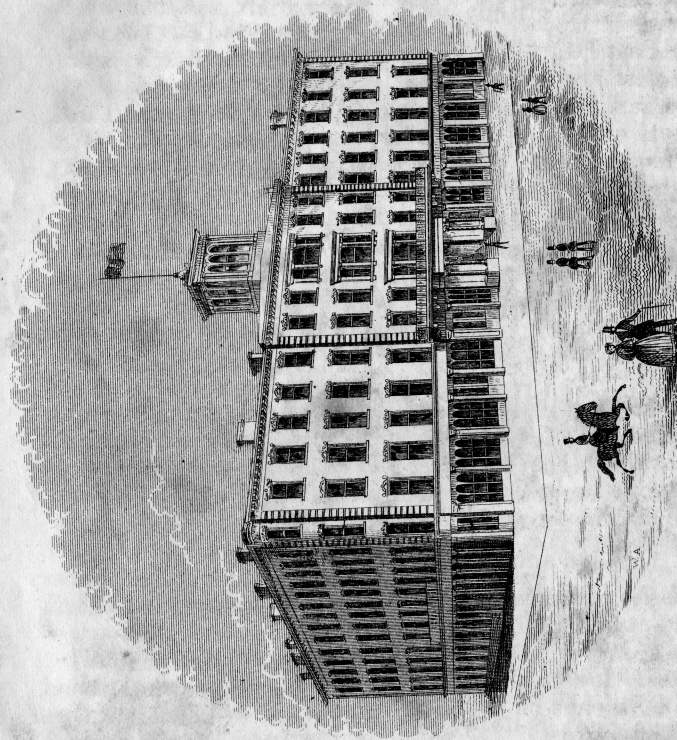
Lovell White, H. P.; A. Y. Hull, E. K.; J. E. Jewett, E. S.; John Youngerman, C. H.; J. M. Griffith, P. S.; Alex. Shaw, R. A. C.; A. Morris, G. M. 3d V.; M. D. Haskell, G. M. 2d V.; J. W. Bradshaw, G. M. 1st V.; Wilson T. Smith, Sec.; Henry Fitger, G.

Des Moines Lodge, No. 25, I. O. O. F., was organized in 1850. Number of members at present one hundred. Meets every Monday evening, in the east end of the third story of Exchange Block.

Golden Rule Division, No. 8, Sons of Temperance, has been lately organized, and as yet has no regular place of meeting. Thirty members are enrolled, and accessions continually received.

Des Moines Lodge, No. 188, Independent Order of Good Templars, meets on the east side of the river.





Wm. Shepley & Bro. 10th, Pittsburgh, Pa.

SAVERY HOTEL.

HOTELS.

The DEMOINE HOUSE, corner of Walnut and First streets; the EVERETT HOUSE, on Third street; COLLINS HOUSE, MARKET STREET HOUSE, on Market street, and the GROUT HOUSE, in East Des Moines, are all first class hotels, and afford the best accommodations to the traveling public.

THE SAVERY HOUSE, now being built, will be one of the finest hotels west of the Mississippi river and north of St. Louis. Its dimensions are one hundred and thirty-two feet square. It will be three stories in height, of brick, and estimated to cost \$60,000. When finished it will benefit as well as adorn the city, and yield an ample remuneration to the enterprising capitalists who have embarked their means extensively in the project. (*See engraving.*)

A magnificent hotel is being erected, by a company, on the east side of the river.

RIVERS.

The Des Moines river, at this city, is usually from two to two hundred and fifty yards wide. Two bridges already span it; a third has been begun. The Raccoon river is crossed by one bridge. All take toll. The Des Moines is navigable during a part of the year.

RAILROADS.

The Mississippi and Missouri Railroad, connecting Davenport with Council Bluffs, is finished as far as Iowa City, and under contract part of the distance between that city and Des Moines. It connects with the Chicago and Rock Island Railroad, by means of the celebrated railroad bridge over the Mississippi river. The company expect to complete the road to Des Moines by the fall of 1858. In entering Des Moines the route passes transversely through the eastern portion of the city, crosses the Des Moines river on a substantial bridge, at the foot of Locust street, and continues along the line of that street to the Depot Grounds in the western part of the city. This depot is laid out on a site donated for that purpose by Jonathan Lyon, Esq., and it is

confidently expected that much of the business will center there. At a special election in the fall of 1856, the citizens of Polk county decided that the county should take stock in the road to the amount of \$300,000. This railroad passes through the fertile counties of Scott, Johnson, Iowa, Poweshiek, Jasper, Polk, Dallas, Guthrie, Audubon, and Shelby, to the Missouri river in Potawatamie county, and is of vast importance to the State.

Another line, a continuation of the North Missouri Railroad, enters the State from the south, at Davis county, and passing through Appanoose, Lucas, and Warren to Des Moines, is to proceed northward towards the Minnesota line.

Part of this road is already under contract, and its early completion is expected.

The Des Moines Valley Railroad is another important line, which is being rapidly pushed forward. Twenty miles are already finished. It leaves Keokuk, in Lee county, and passes through portions of Van Buren, Jefferson, Wappelo, Mahaska, Marion, Jasper, and Polk counties, to Des Moines, thence northward to Minnesota. The region of country through which this road passes is not excelled by any in the world in fertility of soil, abundance of minerals, and valuable water power.

These roads, concentrating at Des Moines, must conduce greatly to its improvement and commercial importance. The facilities for travel and transportation, which are now so scanty, will then be cheaply and abundantly enjoyed, and the resources of mineral and agricultural wealth, so profusely bestowed upon the central portion of Iowa, developed to the world.

Who shall say that in view of her past history, and present manifestations, Des Moines is not destined speedily to become a rich and populous city. With a navigable river, railroads fast extending towards her, inexhaustible sources of wealth in the surrounding region, and above all, ener-

getic and public-spirited business men, her course must be upward, toward the zenith of power and opulence. Truly is she fitly chosen, as capital of a young though mighty State, whose rapid strides towards greatness have already distanced much older commonwealths, and whose fame is destined to widen, and her power to increase, to an extent unexpected and unparalleled in the history of our great confederacy.

DISTANCES FROM DES MOINES

To various points throughout the State, by stage route.

<i>East.</i>	<i>Miles.</i>	<i>West.</i>	<i>Miles.</i>
Newton,	35	Adel,	25
Montezuma,	75	Wiscotta,	35
Marengo,	100	Morrison's	75
Iowa City,	125	Lewis,	100
Davenport,	170	Council Bluffs,	150
<i>South-east.</i>		<i>South-west.</i>	
Munroe,	30	Churchville,	18
Pella,	44	Wintersel,	35
Oskaloosa,	65	<i>South.</i>	
Eddyville,	75	Indianola,	20
Ottumwa,	90	Chariton,	55
Agency City,	100	<i>North.</i>	
Fairfield,	118	Polk City,	15
Mt. Pleasant,	137	Boonsboro',	45
Burlington,	170	Homer,	75
Keokuk,	175	Fort Dodge,	85

Stages arrive and depart daily from the Everett House.

INDUCEMENTS FOR IMMIGRANTS.

The State of Iowa is attracting its hundreds and thousands of settlers, every year, who, leaving the over-crowded States at the East, emigrate to the mighty and generous West, to find room, riches, health, honors and happiness. Men of all classes—young, old, poor, affluent, ignorant, learned—fossilized bachelors, and hopeful, strong-headed husbands and fathers;—men of all professions, from the broken-down politician and quack doctor, up to the honest, industrious mechanic, and shrewd, enterprising business man; from the keen Connecticut clock-peddler, to the broad-faced German, just from “Der Faderland,” are incessantly crowding toward Iowa.

This book may fall into the hands of some whose inclinations have already wandered to the bright and ample domain of Iowa, and who meditate seriously on emigration. To afford reliable, and perhaps gratifying, information to such, we would present the claims of the Des Moines Valley, and endeavor to portray more particularly the inducements which Polk and contiguous counties offer to settlers of all classes and pursuits.

There are thousands of mechanics, farmers, and laboring men, in New England States, New York, Pennsylvania and Ohio, who, as they well know themselves, are drudging slowly along year after year, “living from hand to mouth,” and earning by severe toil, a pittance which procures only a bare subsistence. The mechanic often finds his dollar and a quarter a day a poor recompense for his skill and hard labor, providing him but sparingly with the ordinary comforts of life; and with, perhaps, a young family growing up around him, often realizes the pressing necessity of increasing, by some means, the wages from which it should

derive an adequate and comfortable support, and to accumulate something for a time of adversity or old age. How is he, under ordinary circumstances, to do this in the East? He knows, perhaps, but little beyond the bounds of his avocation, or if, luckily, prepared for more lucrative pursuits, lacks that master-key to success, that "*sine qua non*," CAPITAL. In his business, he must work at the same terms as others. otherwise he will have no work at all. An almost unlimited competition and his own urgent necessities, compel him to labor for a sum which produces to himself and those dependent on him, scarcely more than the demands of life and decency absolutely require. From month to month, year to year, the same stereotyped routine occurs—the same toil, the same reward, the same struggles for respectability and enjoyment, and the same results.

In the West the mechanic's chances for fortune are different. There is a vast amount of mechanical labor to be done, and to be done *right away!* An army of mechanics is needed in almost every county, and certainly in those which, from their position and consequent advantages, are fast increasing in wealth and population. Instead of *a dollar and a quarter, per diem*, from *two to five dollars* is the usual compensation. Houses, barns, fences, bridges, and the like, are needed; needed soon, and must be erected at whatever cost. Mills, manufactories, railroads, boats, and all the thousand and various wants of a new State, profusely endowed with natural advantages, and destined soon to occupy a high position in wealth and commercial importance among her sisters—must be built as soon as possible. There is plenty to do, and good pay for doing it. In the city of Des Moines, which has nearly doubled her population annually, for the last three years, and now contains about 5,000 inhabitants, no less than three hundred stores and dwellings were erected the past year (1856), some of them large and costly edifices, besides innumerable buildings for other purposes. The present season (1857), will

see, no doubt, a greater number of buildings erected than the last. Carpenters, stone-cutters, brick-layers, painters, plasterers, and such other mechanics as are required in erecting and completing buildings, are in good demand. Millwrights, blacksmiths, wagon-makers, tanners, cabinet-makers, weavers, cloth-fullers, and all classes of useful mechanics are much needed in our city. Men who understand their business, can do well—of “botches,” there are as many here as will ever be required, and those of that description had better stay where their labors are better appreciated than here. More saw mills are needed, not only near the city, but at all points, where timber is plenty, throughout the country. The lumber business is as profitable as any other that can be engaged in. Brick making is also very remunerative. No department of manufactures is at all over-crowded, unless it be with business. Water power, to any extent, is afforded throughout the Des Moines valley; coal is abundant and cheap, and every inducement is here for the extensive employment of all kinds of machinery, which leads us to indulge the hope that in a few years at most, when the agricultural and mineral wealth of this region shall be fully developed, that our citizens shall be but very little dependent upon the East, unless as a market for their produce.

But the great and evident want of Des Moines is, the presence and results of intelligent and energetic farmers settled in the surrounding country. Towns cannot exist of themselves; they need a cultivated country around to sustain them. This desideratum we sadly lack. Though many improved tracts of land are to be seen in Polk county, there are few that deserve the name of *farms*; that name so suggestive of neatness, order, thrift and independence. As a consequence of this, produce has at times been extremely high, and this is the more to be regretted when we take into consideration the abundant harvests which the generous soil yields to the hand of the husbandman. Our country,

to be sure, is new; only ten years from the possession of the Indians, and scarcely could be expected to exhibit model farms. The mania for speculation has caused many new settlers to invest in city lots all their available means, and induced the greater portion of the inhabitants to lend their influence to building up the city instead of improving the country. The enjoyment of social, religious and educational privileges has also contributed strongly to the same result; but the necessity of this no longer exists to any great extent.

At the present time, it is a reasonable estimate to say that not more than one sixteenth, or about 23,000 acres, of the land in Polk county is under any degree of cultivation. Part of the remainder is, of course, timber, which will be carefully kept, and the land it occupies not cleared for some time; but after making a deduction of one twelfth for it, there will remain 314,920 acres of unimproved prairie, at least 300,000 of which is susceptible of high cultivation. When the exhaustless fertility of this land is taken into consideration, and when it is remembered that no portion of it lies more than twenty-five miles distant from the *permanent capital of the State*, a city which is destined to be connected by railroads to all parts of the Union, within three years; which of itself consumes more than has hitherto been produced in the county, and is rapidly increasing in population, it seems unaccountable that these lands are not occupied and well cultivated. Those who embark early in the business will, if they are men of the right stamp, undoubtedly soon acquire fortunes by farming alone, without taking into account the undoubted rise in the price of their lands.

Beyond the confines of the city, beyond the influences of town-lot speculation, the price of land varies from three to thirty dollars per acre, according to its nature: whether timber or prairie, its degree of improvement, its proximity to saw mills, lines of railroad, or distance from Des Moines.

These may seem high figures to some eastern men, whose ideas of Iowa are that it is almost a wilderness, and who, unconscious of their mistake, firmly believe that anywhere west of the Mississippi land can be bought at \$1.25 per acre. Such a state of things did exist from ten to fifteen years ago, and until recently there has been considerable unentered land in the Fort Des Moines District. But the extensive tracts which Congress has donated within the past two or three years to sundry railroad companies, consumed it all, and the only public land in Iowa, subject to entry at the present time, lies in the north part of the State, and is on many accounts not desirable. The time for obtaining land at Congress prices has gone by; those who did not come soon enough to obtain them need not blame those who were before them, and stood the brunt of a frontier life, if by so doing they did make some fortunate purchases. But there is plenty of land to be bought on reasonable terms yet, although from individuals and not the government; and money to be made in cultivating it. These lands are not rocky steeps, cold, poor, or worn out, but rich, alluvial prairies, the soil abounding in every element necessary to render it productive.

Professor Owen, in his Geological Report made of Iowa and Minnesota, speaking of the nature of the soil in the valley of the Des Moines river, says:

"The prairie country, based on rocks belonging to the Devonian and carboniferous systems, extending up the valley of the Red Cedar, Iowa, and Des Moines as high as latitude 42° , $31'$, presents a body of arable land which, taken as a whole, for richness and organic elements, for amount of saline matter and due admixture of earthly silicates, affords a combination that belongs only to the most fertile upland plains. Throughout this district the general levelness of surface, interrupted only by gentle swells and moderate undulations, offers facilities for the introduction of all those aids which machinery is daily

adding to diminish the labor of cultivation, and render easy and expeditious the collection of an abundant harvest."

Farmers have since proved by experience the correctness of Dr. Owen's scientific researches, and it is now a confirmed and indisputable fact that the valley of the Des Moines, the great inland river of the State, is unsurpassed in fertility by any in the world. "The whole valley watered by this river alternates with luxuriant prairie and heavy timber. Perhaps it may be comprehensively described, to those who have never seen it, as one *grand prairie*—smiling in the face of heaven with rich herbage, and the most gorgeous flowers—relieved at intervals with magnificent groves of the primeval forest. A prairie in full bloom is a most gorgeous and wildly beautiful sight, and when seen for the first time, impresses the beholder with the most agreeable sensations. The richness of such a soil must, of course, strike every mind. This garniture of glory is the type of the hidden wealth within its bosom. The soil is found to be from two to ten feet deep, averaging four feet, and is inexhaustible in fertility. It produces almost spontaneously every agricultural product, and requires an incredible small amount of labor to secure an abundant harvest. It yields from fifty to a hundred and twenty bushels of corn to the acre, say seventy-five on an average, and all other crops in the same proportion."

The timber consists principally of oak, but black and white walnut, sugar maple, linn, hickory and ash are abundant. The Des Moines flows through a heavy growth of timber, from three to eight miles wide, and the streams which intersect it are well fringed with this indispensable article. On the uplands it is not so plenty, and of a dwarfish, knotty description.

Suppose that the farmer locating in Polk county pays the very highest price which we have given, thirty dollars, an acre, (and for that sum the choicest farms, well located and improved, may be obtained) this is still below the cost of

much of the worn out and barren land of the Eastern States. Farmers will toil ten or fifteen years, to clear a farm in Ohio or Pennsylvania, and after that till it with great difficulty, covered as it must be with myriads of stumps. Suppose it originally could be bought for no more than five dollars per acre, it costs them at least fifty before it is even tolerably fit for cultivation. They take it, as the lawyers say, "with all its encumbrances," and by the time they have wrought and dived upon it for half a life time, bitter experience is sure to awaken the thought, that "like the Indian's gun, it costs more than it comes to."

The prairies are natural farms, all ready for the plow-share. No trees, stumps, or roots to interfere with the progress of the black, loamy furrows, which the plow turns up, nothing but the thick-matted and tough sod, the growth of luxuriant and long undisturbed vegetation. The cost of *breaking*, or first plowing, is from two to three dollars per acre, and is accomplished by a large plow, drawn by several yokes of oxen, or team of horses. Good crops of corn are raised the first season, either by cutting holes in the sod with an axe after the plowing is finished; or by dropping the corn in every third furrow, while the plowing is being performed.

We have supposed an immigrant to pay thirty dollars an acre for land here, and have ventured the assertion that even at that price it would prove far more profitable than the vast majority of lands elsewhere. Not only is this land of the best quality, but in the case we have supposed, would be broken, fenced, and supplied with the necessary buildings, so that nothing would be requisite to render the land available, but putting in a crop, securing and marketing it. Now as to the market, many would be surprised to learn that Des Moines is a better market for produce of all kinds than Chicago, Cincinnati or New York. But such is undoubtedly the fact, and is caused by the large number of strangers continually arriving, the tendency of the population to settle

in the town, for reasons before stated, and the little attention which agriculture has yet received. The following table will show the prices of produce. It is taken from the State Journal's *price current*, and continues very nearly the same at all times of the year.

DES MOINES, Feb. 27, 1857.

Flour, per cwt.	-	-	-	-	\$3 75
Corn Meal, per bushel,	-	-	-	-	1 00
Buckwheat Flour, per cwt.	-	-	-	-	4 00
Wheat, per bushel,	-	-	-	90c@	1 00
Corn, " "	-	-	-	70 @	75
Potatoes " "	-	-	-	-	1 00
Butter, per lb.	-	-	-	28 @	30
Eggs, per dozen,	-	-	-	-	25
Hay, per ton,	-	-	-	\$11 00 @	14 00
Wood, per cord,	-	-	-	-	4 00
Coal, per bushel,	-	-	-	-	15

Many would be surprised to learn that notwithstanding the facilities for raising any description of produce, a great deal of our flour comes from Illinois, our cheese from Ohio, and our butter from Vermont! Such, however, is the unmitigated fact. This country, the garden of the world, does not produce enough to feed its own inhabitants! But one reason is or can be assigned: *the soil is not worked—the land is not cultivated—too many of the people are speculating*, and consequently flour is now (May, 1857,) worth \$5 per hundred. In view of these facts, and facts they are beyond all confutation, does not Des Moines and the region surrounding it present superior attractions for farmers? Can flour, butter, cheese, etc., be produced elsewhere and transported here cheaper than skill and industry can afford to produce them in our midst?

But these prices may not continue; agricultural products may become lower in value! We hope so. Suppose they should. Farmers of the Des Moines Valley can better af-

ford to sell a bushel of corn for 25 cts., than the farmers of the Hudson valley can for 50 cents! Taxes are lighter, land is cheaper, and the soil far more productive. A bushel of corn can be raised with less manual labor here than there. Their salt, plaster, guano, and various other manures, their draining and sub-soil plowing, and the thousand scientific and expensive aids which must be employed on poor land, are not needed here. Except for the cultivation of grasses manure is little used, and is no more needed than the ocean needs salt.

Let the prices fall—let them fall an hundred per cent., though at present there is little hope of it. This deterioration of prices can only be produced by vigorous competition among the farmers, by increasing their numbers and efforts. By the time this occurs the railroads will reach the Des Moines, and if more is raised than needed the superfluity can be sent to the less productive regions of the East, as balance due them for supplying us now.

Fencing is an important item in a prairie country, and causes some embarrassment to the farmer. In Polk county timber is sufficiently plenty for all such purposes. Fifty cents a rod is the usual price of fencing material, when it consists of rails; board fences cost more, but are more preferable. The cost of fencing forty acres would be nearly two hundred dollars. Suppose this to be done, and the forty acres planted in potatoes. A very ordinary result from one acre is from three to four hundred bushels. Take, however, only three hundred to the acre, which is sure to be produced, for if anything can be raised in Iowa it is potatoes. The result at the year's end would be twelve thousand bushels of potatoes. This article has not failed in the last five years in bringing \$1 per bushel, some time in the season, and often much more. Falling again below the average, say these potatoes are sold at seventy-five cents per bushel. This would realize the handsome sum of *nine thousand dollars*. Fencing, labor, seed, marketing, land,

everything, could be paid for from the results of *one* crop, and yet leave a larger salary for the farmer than members of Congress receive! Is there any inducement for the farmer to settle in Polk county? The reader can decide for himself—he has the facts with which to do so.

Gardening—raising vegetables for the city market—is also most lucrative, and a business which very few are engaged in. For several years the citizens of Des Moines have paid almost fabulous prices for radishes, peas, carrots, lettuce, cabbages, melons, and such other articles, which are usually classed under the head of "*garden truck*." In this business money can be made, and good gardens are much needed. Lands rent from \$1.50 to \$2.50 per acre, and an acre planted in vegetables, well tended, will produce from fifty to two hundred dollars' worth, and even more, according to the season or the skill of the gardener.

To every department of labor Des Moines, and Polk county, presents superior attractions, and those who come with strong arms, hopeful hearts, and a determination to overcome such slight obstacles as are inevitably connected with a new country, cannot fail of ultimate, if not speedy success.

To men in all avocations we can only say, "*Come to the West*." Here the young man can begin life without finding every avenue to distinction closed up by the crowds that throng around it. Here the man advanced in years can secure a noble competency for the children whose future prosperity forms so large a portion of his care. Here is the place for the nature-loving or the dollar-loving man. Both can gratify their desires.

"There is something in the growing, glowing West, with her limitless prairies, her mighty rivers, her mountains of iron, the lavish richness of her bountiful soil, that expands the soul of man, and elevates him above the narrow, cramped and confined ideas of those who are accustomed only to the well-worn channels and small conventionalities

of older hum-drum communities. There the "new man" is apt to find himself an unwelcome jostler, his intrusion received askance, his elbow room begrudged him, and his presence tolerated only upon condition of his accepting the procrustean system of hoary and respectable 'use and want;' unless, indeed, a position can be asserted and maintained by force of very superior talents, or unusual accidental advantages. But here all is new, plastic, and vigorous. Men are wanted here, and welcomed. And here is found, at once, a boundless and untrammelled field of enterprise, adequate to the elastic energies of ingenious youth or mature manhood.

"Therefore, we repeat, let them come—old and young, men and women, boys and girls—with or without 'plunder.' Let them flee from the tax-ridden and miserably governed Egypts in Pennsylvania and Ohio, to the Land of Promise, flowing with something better than milk and honey, and possessing capabilities such as they never dreamed of. Here they shall find welcome homes, and while they speedily help themselves to obtain better fortunes, they shall also have a hand in the proud labor of building up the mighty Empire of the Mississippi Valley."

FINIS.

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Office open every day (except Sundays,) from 8 A. M. to 7 o'clock P. M.

Office open on Sundays from 8 to 9 A. M., and from 4 to 5 P. M.

Mails close every day (except Sunday,) at 6 o'clock P. M.

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Amount of Surplus Earnings, January 1, 1857, 112,379 52

\$312 379 52

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
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
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